

Primakov favours Kurdish accord

PARIS (R) — Soviet Middle East envoy Yevgeny Primakov said Saturday the world should not press for international guarantees to bolster the Iraqi Kurdish autonomy accord with Baghdad. Mr. Primakov told French television that most Kurds favoured the pact agreed in Baghdad last Wednesday and others should not raise doubts over it for the moment. "It is not opportune to pose the question of international guarantees, even if it is a legitimate question," he said. "For the moment neither the Kurds nor Baghdad has asked us for international guarantees." France and Britain Saturday proposed complementary United Nations security guarantees designed to lure hundreds of thousands of Kurdish refugees back to their homes from primitive camps in northern Iraq. France asked for a meeting of the U.N. Security Council to examine the situation in Iraq following the Kurdish autonomy in Iraq (see story below). At the same time, Britain proposed the United Nations send a "U.N. police force" to assure the Kurds they will be safe once they have returned to their cities.

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Two killed in occupied territories

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Unknown assailants killed an Arab youth and a man suspected of collaborating with the Israeli authorities, reports said Saturday. In the occupied West Bank, authorities on Saturday doused the body of 15-year-old Ahmad Hamdan, who was stabbed to death in an olive grove not far from the village of Balaa, where he lived. Journalists said the boy was kidnapped by masked men Thursday.

Arabs urged to keep boycott of Israel

DAMASCUS (R) — A senior Arab League official on Saturday urged Arab states to pursue a boycott of companies doing business with Israel. "The boycott of Israel is an effective weapon to limit Israel's greed and Israel's repression of our people in Palestine and their uprising," said Zaher Aguel, commissioner of the Arab Office for the Boycott of Israel. "We call for commitment to the boycott rules to counter the Israeli obstinacy," he added in a speech at the opening session of a week-long meeting of the office in the Syrian capital.

Pakistan will not dump nuclear programme

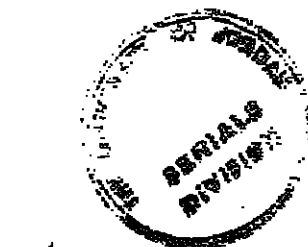
ISLAMABAD (R) — Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said Saturday that Pakistan would not give up its nuclear research programme even if it had to suffer hardships through loss of foreign aid. The official APP news agency quoted as telling a rally in the northwestern town of Bannu that "foreign quarters" were accusing Pakistan of making an atomic bomb, despite its assurances that its nuclear programme is peaceful. "They desire that we forge or bargain on our peaceful nuclear programme which we shall never do," Mr. Sharif said. He was apparently referring to the United States, which cut off all military and economic aid to Islamabad last October under President George Bush's refusal to certify to Congress that Islamabad was not making a bomb.

Yeltsin nominated for Russian presidency

MOSCOW (AP) — Democratic Russia, a coalition of reformers and political parties, nominated Boris Yeltsin as its candidate Saturday for expected June elections for president of the Russian Republic, TASS reported. Democratic Russia, an anti-Communist organisation, claims 1.3 million members. Mr. Yeltsin currently is chairman of the legislature, now the highest office in Russia. Russians voted by an overwhelming margin in March to create a presidency filled by popular vote. The election must still be approved by the Russian congress in May. Mr. Yeltsin is widely expected to win the election, which would give him popularly-backed authority in Russia, which is the largest of the 15 Soviet republics with half the population and three-quarters of the land. Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, in contrast, has never faced the voters.

Fez rioters jailed up to ten years

RABAT (R) — A court in the central Moroccan city of Fez sentenced 42 people to between four months and 10 years in prison for their part in violent riots last December 14. A group of 48 appeared in the Fez appeal court charged with setting fire to public buildings, damaging cars and shops and participating in the riots. Two were sentenced to 10 years and 40 to prison terms ranging from eight years to four months. Six were acquitted.



Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يوميات سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية والراي

Jordan expects major Soviet role in efforts for peace in Mideast

AMMAN (J.T) — Foreign Minister Taher Masri Saturday welcomed a forthcoming visit by Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh to the Middle East and said that Jordan expected an active Soviet role in current peace efforts in the region.

Speaking on Jordan Radio Mr. Masri said the outcome of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's mission depended on Israeli response to the peace efforts. "Jordan welcomes the forthcoming visit of Mr. Bessmertnykh and we expect a great deal of his mission," Mr. Masri told Jordan radio in an interview. "The Soviet Union can play an important role... and it has plenty of cards to play," he said. He said Moscow's position on a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict is "close to that of the Arabs and its understanding of a regional settlement is based on Israeli withdrawal from Arab territories."

"Moscow shares with us the principles of exchanging land for peace as well as opposing Israel's cancerous settlement in Arab land," Mr. Masri added.

"We expect a lot from the

Soviet Union," Mr. Masri said. "It has many cards which it can use."

He said Moscow opposed Israel's policy of building settlements on the occupied Arab territories and understood that using U.N. Resolution 242 as the base for any peace talks meant Israel exchanging land for peace.

Mr. Bessmertnykh is due to begin a Middle East tour soon. Earlier this week he told Mr. Baker that Moscow would co-sponsor talks between Israel and the Arabs and Israel and the Palestinians within the framework of a regional peace conference.

No date is yet fixed for his trip but Israel expects Moscow first to renew diplomatic ties with the Jewish state.

Mr. Baker broke off his tour of the region, during talks in Israel Friday when he heard that his mother had died.

State department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said on Saturday Mr. Baker's seemed to be putting the burden of salvaging his peace mission on Israel and still needed some answers on crucial questions he put to Israeli leaders.

Mr. Baker has been trying to

persuade Israel, the Palestinians and Arab states to attend a peace conference which would serve as a vehicle for direct talks between all the parties.

Mr. Masri said that perhaps Mr. Baker has achieved a slight progress through his tour and talks in the Arab countries, but it seems that he was less fortunate in his talks with Israeli government leaders.

Mr. Baker would perhaps have to return to this region more than once so that he can obtain further replies from Israel, Mr. Masri said.

Mr. Bessmertnykh's visit to Israel is the first by a Soviet foreign minister since 1967, when Moscow severed relations with Israel.

Mr. Masri did not comment on the development of the Soviet-Israeli relations.

Mr. Masri praised Mr. Baker's regional mission and said: "This is the first time that Washington is genuinely seeking to resolve the complicated Arab-Israeli conflict."

The minister refused to say whether he was optimistic by the outcome of Mr. Baker's peace mission adding that the "ball is now in Israeli court."



Tareq Aziz

Aziz demands West get out of Iraqi affairs

ALGIERS (AP) — Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz said Saturday that friction with Iraq's Kurdish minority could be eased if the United States and its allies stop meddling in Iraq's internal affairs.

"There exists the possibility of a solution to the Kurdish question, on the condition that the Americans and the West stop intervening in internal Iraqi affairs," Mr. Aziz said.

Mr. Aziz made his comments on arriving in Algeria early Saturday from Rabat, Morocco. He was greeted by Algerian Foreign Minister Sid Ahmed Ghazali.

"We are able to solve the Kurdish question and will solve it, notably after the accord with the Kurdish leaders who expressed their disagreement with Western actions vis-a-vis the Kurdish refugees," Mr. Aziz said in Algiers.

"The West has amplified the Kurdish question and immersed itself in the internal affairs of Iraq, violating its sovereignty in an attempt at destabilisation," he said.

Hundreds of thousands of Kurds fled their homes for the mountains of northern Iraq, Turkey and Iran after a post-Gulf war rebellion.

The United States, Britain and France have established zones in northern Iraq to entice the Kurds to return home.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and Kurdish leader Jalal Talabani agreed earlier this week that the Kurdish regions of northern Iraq can enjoy autonomy under a 1970 accord.

France demanded Saturday that the United Nations Security Council examine the humanitarian relief efforts for the Kurds in light of the new agreement.

Mr. Aziz has carried messages to the leaders of Libya, Tunisia, Mauritania and Morocco in his present swing through Arab capitals. Details of their contents have not been disclosed.

Mr. Aziz has also met Palestine Liberation Organisation Chairman Yasser Arafat.

In an interview published Saturday in the Moroccan opposition newspaper Al Itihad Al Achiraki, Mr. Aziz said Iraq was on the path towards democratic, constitutional government.

"The logic of revolutionary legitimacy must give way to the logic of constitutional legitimacy," the newspaper quoted him as saying.

Mr. Aziz asked the Arab Maghreb Union — Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya and Mauritania — to continue to support Iraq on the international stage.

Iraq found some of its strongest support during the Gulf war in the Maghreb countries. Only Morocco sent a token detachment of troops to join the U.S.-led coalition in Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Aziz later delivered a message from President Saddam Hussein to President Chadli Benjedid. The contents were not disclosed.

King stresses need for continued cohesion, respect for opinions

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein called Saturday for maintaining the cohesion and for more awareness among Jordanian people of the conditions through which the Arab Nation is passing.

In a Cabinet meeting he chaired, King Hussein expressed his confidence that the domestic process in the Kingdom would be enhanced through deepening public participation in shouldering responsibilities and respecting opinions as well as human rights.

King Hussein called for stepping up dialogue between the various schools of thought in Jordan in the same spirit which prevailed during the discussions

by the General Commission on the National Charter which brought about understanding and convergence of ideas, laying the foundation stone for endorsing the charter and organising political life in Jordan.

King Hussein reviewed the situation prevailing in the Arab World and the various challenges facing it. He affirmed that the current stage demands swift and conscious reactions on the internal, Arab and international levels.

The King stressed the need to prepare the ground for reconstructing the Arab Order in a manner that will enable the Arab Nation to face the challenges confronting it.

For Jordan, the Palestinian cause, in terms of reality and responsibility is a question of a right, life and future

which should be dealt with on this basis, the King said.

King Hussein affirmed that Jordan will shoulder its full responsibility in accordance with its principles in working on ensuring that the Palestinian people will secure their legitimate right and their land in the way they accept.

"To achieve this end, Jordan will continue Arab, Islamic and international contacts to push forward the wheel of a just and lasting peace based on international legitimacy and commitment to the constant rights of the Palestinian people," the King said.

The King lauded the Cabinet's efforts in tackling problems facing citizens. The Cabinet meeting was attended by Prime Minister Madad Hadidan and Royal Court Chief Shari Zaid Ibn Shaker.

Baker puts onus for peace on Israel; Arens, Levy feud

Combined agency dispatches

U.S. SECRETARY OF State James Baker, ending his third Middle East tour since the Gulf war, now seems to be putting the burden of salvaging his peace mission on Israel.

"We still need some answers from the Israeli government... before we can move this process forward," said State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler.

She read a carefully-worded statement from Mr. Baker to reporters travelling from Israel on his aircraft, which refuelled at Shannon Friday night enroute to Andrews air force base near Washington.

Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Arens, disputing remarks by Israeli foreign ministry officials, said Saturday no agreement was reached with Mr. Baker on a Middle East peace conference.

Mr. Arens said a U.S.-Israeli proposal for a regional peace conference was turning into a full-fledged international conference, which remained unacceptable to the Jewish state.

His criticism reflected differences within Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's Likud party and right-wing coalition which could thwart Mr. Baker's efforts to start Israeli-Arab negotiations.

Mr. Baker told reporters after meeting Mr. Shamir earlier Friday that he needed more answers on crucial questions, but did not know if he would make a fourth peace-making trip to the region.

He left Israel slightly ahead of schedule after learning that his 90-year-old mother had died in Houston, Texas. He cancelled meetings with Mr. Arens and Palestinian leaders.

Ms. Tutwiler said Mr. Baker was to fly to Houston Saturday and the

funeral would probably be held on Monday.

When he returned to Washington, she said, he intended to see President George Bush "to determine appropriate next steps in the search for Middle East peace."

In Washington, Mr. Bush said there was cause for optimism about Mr. Baker's tour. "I think it's fair to say that, though problems remain, I think the bottom line is there's some reason for optimism," he told reporters.

Mr. Bush refused to provide details but said Mr. Baker had made progress. "There are still some sticky problems, but we're not going to give up," he said. "We're going to continue to try to bring peace to that troubled corner of the world."

Mr. Baker has been trying to persuade Israel, the Palestinians and Arab states to attend a peace conference which would serve as vehicle for

(Continued on page 5)

Rafsanjani, Assad discuss post-war Gulf, hostages

DAMASCUS (R) — Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, making his first foreign trip as head of state, opened talks Saturday with President Hafez Al Assad of Syria.

Officials and diplomats said the talks would cover issues related to post-Gulf war security in the region, the plight of Western hostages held in Lebanon and ways of cementing ties.

Mr. Rafsanjani, who was accorded a full ceremonial welcome by Mr. Assad, told reporters: "There are many issues in our region and matters dealing with our neighbours which we will discuss," in an apparent reference to Iraq.

Mr. Assad, who visited Iran in September, said there were many important issues which needed discussion following the Gulf war.

"We worked and will continue to work for the benefit of our people and the people of the region. We are countries who

have full freedom in adopting their decisions..." said Mr. Assad.

"We sought to utilise this freedom which we possess for the benefit of our people in Iran and Syria and all Arab and Islamic peoples..."

Mr. Velayati visited Saudi Arabia on Friday for the first time since the restoration of diplomatic ties last last month and said both agreed to work together for regional security.

Syria, Egypt and the Saudi-led Gulf Cooperation Council signed a security and economic cooperation agreement in Damascus in March, which was criticised by Tehran.

Iran says it should be included in any agreement.

Diplomats said Syria played a major role in improving post-Gulf-war ties between Iran and Gulf states and this paved the way for Saudi pledges to include Iran in security arrangements.

Diplomat denies Karrubi made deal with candidate Reagan

NICOSIA (Agencies) — An Iranian who played a key role in the release of 52 U.S. hostages denied reports that a senior Tehran official struck a deal with Ronald Reagan's election campaign manager to delay their freedom.

Former White House aide Gary Sick said he had learned a secret deal was discussed during two 1980 meetings in Madrid between William Casey, who headed Mr. Reagan's reelection campaign, and Mehdi Karrubi, a cleric representing Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

"Mr. Karrubi played no part in the negotiations," Behzad Nabavi, a former Iranian deputy prime minister involved in Algeria's accord on the hostages, told the national Iranian News Agency IRNA.

Behzad Nabavi told IRNA that Iran has pushed to finish the negotiations before the November 1980 U.S. election, when Mr. Reagan defeated incumbent Jimmy Carter.

"Of course this was not an attempt to help with the reelection of Carter in the presidential

election," said Mr. Nabavi, who headed the commission that handled talks over the hostages.

"Rather our view was that if not settled, the negotiations must start from the beginning," Mr. Nabavi told IRNA in an interview.

"Due to problems in its execution, if we reached no agreement under the Carter administration it was not clear if we would have been able to have fresh negotiations with the Reagan administration," he added.

Mr. Sick, on the staff of Carter's National Security Council from August 1976 to April 1981, said in an April 15 column in the New York Times that the Reagan Campaign sought to delay the hostage release to prevent Mr. Carter's reelection.

In exchange for arms shipments from Israel, critical during the 1980-88 war with Iraq, Iran agreed to delay release of the hostages until after the election, Mr. Sick wrote.

Mr. Casey became the director

Velayati sees new era in ties with Saudis

JEDDAH (Agencies) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati said before leaving Saturday that relations between the kingdom and the Islamic Republic had entered a new era, with the Saudi monarch expressing interest in visiting Iran.

"A new page has opened up in relations between Iraq and Saudi Arabia," Mr. Velayati was quoted as saying by the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA). The foreign minister's two-day visit put the seal on ties renewed last month after a four-year estrangement.

Mr. Velayati spoke after his late night Friday meeting with King Fahd and the talks he held with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal.

Mr. Velayati flew to Damascus to join Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani on an official visit there.

Iran's official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) said the king pledged to help initiate a campaign in Saudi Arabia to raise money for the over million Kurdish refugees in Iran.

King Fahd also expressed the hope that he could visit Tehran at an "appropriate opportunity."

King Fahd received Mr. Velayati at his Salam Palace in the Red Sea port city of Jeddah following the Iranian delegation's return from the neighbouring holy city of Mecca where Mr. Velayati performed a pilgrimage to Islam's holiest shrines.

"As the two leading countries in the Persian Gulf, Iran and Saudi Arabia have decided to maintain close, strategic, and comprehensive cooperation on ensuring regional security," Mr. Velayati said in remarks broadcast on Tehran Radio.

Mr. Velayati said regional security without Iran's participation would be meaningless.

"We consider regional cooperation to be the basis for regional security, and so far the regional countries have not only not agreed with this, but we believe they are all serious about achieving this."

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150 Somali refugees to go home from Jordan this week

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Around 150 Somali refugees are expected to be flown from Amman to the northern Somali town of Berbera this week, senior U.N. officials said Saturday.

The 150 represent almost half of the foreign nationals who remain in Jordan seeking asylum in third countries after getting stranded in the Kingdom in the wake of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August.

"We have received landing permission for Berbera and we hope to send the flight out Tuesday," said Janvier De Riedmatten, head of the Jordan mission of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Mr. De Riedmatten stressed that the repatriation was being planned on the explicit, individual request of the Somalis since one of the fundamental principles of UNHCR was never to send any refugee anywhere against his or her will.

With the departure of the group, about 100 Somalis, including families, will remain in Jordan in addition to 66 Iraqis who also have requested UNHCR help to secure political refugee in third countries.

"Some of them are waiting for visas for other countries arranged through relatives and friends and do not want to go back to Somalia right now,"

said Ismail Hamdullah, a Somali community leader. "Some others are too sick to travel."

The Somalis are living in accommodation provided by UNHCR, which also supplies them basic food needs. Some of them are in hotels while others are living in rented apartments.

About 150 of the Somalis were living in one of the camps at Azraq which were set up for evacuees from Kuwait and Iraq, and they were moved to Amman when the authorities closed the camps when the flow of evacuees stopped in early March.

"Those who will be leaving this week are mostly of the Ishaq tribe from northern Somalia where the security situation has returned to normal," Mr. Hamdullah said. "Some of the others who remain are from the south and their return home is dependent on the security situation in southern Somalia," he added.

Latest reports from Somalia spoke of intermittent clashes in the south, where rival Somali groups as well as loyalists of the ousted regime of President Mohammad Siad Barre are fighting among each other. The president was ousted in January but pockets of his loyalists remain scattered in the central and southern parts of the country.

In addition to the group from Jordan, another 116

stranded Somalis are expected to be repatriated from Syria, Mr. Hamdullah told the Jordan Times.

Over 1,200 of the 1,750-strong Somali community fled Kuwait through Iraq to Jordan following the Aug. 2 Iraqi takeover of the emirate. The number dwindled to 330 by mid-March after many of them found alternative refuges or returned to their homeland through their own means.

The outflow came to an almost standstill when it appeared that the regime of Siad Barre had nullified all existing Somali passports and announced that Somalia was only recognising new Somali passports issued through its embassies abroad. Airlines refused to accept the old Somali passports as valid travel documents.

Since Somalia does not maintain an embassy in Jordan, refugees had to travel to Syria to get consular help and new passports. Some of them did this, but got stranded in Damascus when the simmering civil war exploded into full violence and battles raged in Mogadishu, the capital, for weeks before the Siad Barre regime was toppled.

Mr. De Riedmatten said UNHCR was not planning to repatriate Somalis to the south of the country until the situation there becomes clear and it is established that there is no security risk for the returnees.

Radical to lead Iranian pilgrims to Mecca

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has appointed a radical former intelligence chief to lead Iranian pilgrims to Saudi Arabia and encouraged him to whip up anti-Western sentiment during the holy season.

Tehran Radio said Ayatollah Khamenei issued a decree appointing Hojatoleslam Mohammad Reza Shahri as his personal representative to the Haj. It said he would supervise the 110,000 Iranian pilgrims taking part in the rituals in the holy cities of Mecca and Medina in June.

The Iranians had boycotted the Haj over the past three seasons amid a strain in Riyadh-Tehran relations.

During the 1987 rituals, clashes between worshippers and the Saudi police killed 402 people, most of them Iranians, who tried to stage political rallies. The Saudi ban such activities during the pilgrimage season.

Hojatoleslam Reza Shahri served as intelligence minister 1984-1989. He then became prosecutor general. He belongs to the radical clique in the Iranian hierarchy that opposes President Hashemi Rafsanjani's liberal policies and his efforts to bridge ties to the West.

Ayatollah Khamenei, a staunch ally of Mr. Rafsanjani, has often taken steps to appease the radicals and avoid an open confrontation between the two camps.

"The camp of blasphemy and arrogance, led by the tyrannical and hostile regime of America ... occupies anywhere it wishes and plunders the lives and wealth of the Muslims," the radio quoted Ayatollah Khamenei as telling Hojatoleslam Reza Shahri in the letter of appointment.

"During the Haj rituals, up to the limits of one's capability and possibility, the ties of fraternity with the Muslims from other states should be strengthened; and while enquiring about their problems and activities, the certain political facts which are known to the majority or people in Islamic Republic should be communicated to them."

"Muslims should be encouraged to unite and should be made wary of the enemies' conspiracies," Ayatollah Khamenei said. He told him to "carry out to the letter all orders" issued by the late founder of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, to the previous Haj leaders.

Commenting on the appointment, Mujahideen-e-Khalq, Iran's main opposition group based in Iraq, said Hojatoleslam Reza Shahri would go to Saudi Arabia to "carry out the regime's reactionary objectives and export terrorism."

A statement from the Mujahideen's press office in London said: "For many years, Reza Shahri has been in charge of one of the regime's terrorist group abroad called 'Organisation of the Islamic Revolution of the Arabian peninsula.'"

The appointment was announced in Tehran while Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati was in Mecca, the birthplace of Prophet Mohammad, performing a pilgrimage after official talks with the Saudi government.

It was his first trip to the kingdom since relations were restored last month, ending a three-year rupture. Part of the talks were devoted to arrangements for the Iranian pilgrims resuming their participation in Haj, one of the main pillars of the Islamic faith.

Saudi Arabia severed ties with Iran in April 1988, accusing Tehran of terrorism and subversion.

PoW return from S. Arabia delayed, Red Cross says

RIYADH (R) — Thousands of Iraqi prisoners of war (PoWs) have had their return home from Saudi Arabia delayed while Saudi authorities reorganise their camps, the Red Cross said Friday.

A spokesman for the International Red Cross (ICRC) in Riyadh told Reuters the repatriation process stopped last Monday as the remaining 10,000-15,000 prisoners were being transferred to central camps near the kingdom's northern border.

"No further repatriation can take place while the reorganisation process goes on — The (Saudi) are bringing the prisoners from many scattered camps to a more central location," the spokesman said.

He did not say where the PoWs were being taken but said the process would probably take one week.

Around 75,000 PoWs have been registered and 62,000 have returned home so far. The repatriation process was halted for four days last week due to the Eid Al Fitr holiday, then resumed on Saturday and Sunday when a total of 1,336 PoWs were sent home.

The ICRC official said "thousands" of Iraqi PoWs had refused to go home but it was difficult to say exactly how many because the process of registering remaining PoWs was still going

on. "The repatriation process is not yet over. Some people change their minds several times in one day — our policy is to keep the door open to everyone who wants to go back," he said.

A U.N. spokeswoman said in Geneva Friday Saudi Arabia had agreed to house up to 50,000 Iraqi refugees and PoWs who did not want to go home at a camp at Rafha in northern Saudi Arabia.

She said Saudi Arabia would spend \$30 million to expand the capacity at the camp, near the Iraqi border. A U.S. airlift would also start bringing Iraqi refugees from camps on the Kuwaiti border to Rafha on Sunday, she said.

Saudi Commander Prince Khalid Ben Sultan said Thursday the kingdom would build a fully-equipped camp near Rafha but said it would house between 7,000-8,000 refugees — mainly women, children, and the elderly. There were no further details.

The PoWs — who were returning home at a rate of about 5,000 a day during the first half of April — were given newspapers to read and radios to listen to so that they were aware of recent developments in Iraq, the ICRC spokeswoman said.

He could not confirm reports that some Iraqi PoWs were wounded in near-riots at crowded camps by prisoners angered when their return home was delayed.

'Sheikh Saad's son, nephew involved with death squads'

LONDON (AP) — U.S. government officials have confronted the crown prince of Kuwait with evidence that one of his sons and a nephew were involved in organising death squads against Palestinians, according to a report Saturday in the Independent.

The London newspaper quoted unnamed U.S. sources in Diyarbakir, southeast Turkey, as saying that the Kuwaiti squads were torturing and killing Palestinian civilians.

The Kuwaitis have accused many Palestinians of collaborating with Iraqi troops during the Iraqi occupation of the emirate. But reporter Robert Fisk wrote in the Independent that the Kuwaitis draw little or no distinction between collaborators and tens of thousands of Palestinians who remained loyal to Kuwait.

Mr. Fisk in his report from Diyarbakir quoted the U.S. sources as saying that the secret meeting between the U.S. officials and Crown Prince Saad al Abdallah Al Sabah took place last month.

Mr. Fisk reported: "According to U.S. sources here, the crown prince ... indignantly denied his family's implication in the atrocities, but after being handed names, dates and other details of the execution squads, he sent his son on a 'long-term sabbatical outside the emirate.'"

The human rights group Amnesty International said this month that scores of people have been killed and hundreds arbitrarily held and beaten by security forces and vigilante groups since Kuwait's liberation from Iraqi occupation at the end of February.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who visited Kuwait Tues-

day, said the crown acknowledged that abuses occurred in the first days after liberation and now have been stopped.

Mr. Fisk reported Saturday: "American sources here have now revealed that an undercover team of U.S. special forces and specially trained military reservist officers ... were given the task after the liberation of Kuwait of tracking down hundreds of missing Palestinian civilians who disappeared into the hands of Kuwait's own security forces."

"They found substantial evidence of torture, and the U.S. government's own current files list 350 Palestinians still missing and feared dead at the hands of the Kuwaiti authorities."

Mr. Fisk said the U.S. State Department had found out that the Kuwaiti government-in-exile in Saudi Arabia had originally planned to deport all 200,000 of the Palestinians after liberation.

He said that in the days immediately after liberation U.S. special forces originally cooperated with Kuwait special forces in sweeps through Palestinian districts of Kuwait City.

But he quoted a second source as saying: "We got the sweeps stopped and we put pressure on the emir to say that law-abiding citizens would be allowed to stay ... we got names of people who were setting up and running the execution squads and we went to see the crown prince, who is the martial law administrator."

"He absolutely denied all knowledge until we showed him the names of those involved in setting the thing up. They included one of his sons and a nephew. He then accepted the truth and sent his son on a long-term sabbatical."

Vietnam-era brass say Gulf war one of a kind

WASHINGTON (AP) — Three former U.S. military commanders said Friday the Gulf war bears little comparison to past or future military challenge and cautioned against smugness over the outcome.

"Our campaign in the Gulf was one of a kind and we should not get cocky about our success," said retired General William C. Westmoreland, 77.

Westmoreland, retired Admiral Elmo Zumwalt and retired Air Force Gen. John Vogt spoke before the House of Representatives Armed Services Defence Policy Subcommittee.

Chairman Les Aspin said the hearing was convened to examine whether the Gulf war was "so unique an event that we face dangers in drawing narrow lessons" over the defeat of Iraqi forces.

MIDDLE NEWS IN BRIEF

State Department denies Glaspie to quit

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. State Department Friday denied a report that April Glaspie, the ambassador to Iraq accused of failing to deter Iraq from invading Kuwait, was resigning. Cable News Network reported Thursday that Ms. Glaspie was quitting. "She's not leaving. I talked to her this morning. She does intend to spend a year as a diplomat in residence at a U.S. university. This is a very common follow-on assignment for many returning ambassadors," said State Department spokesman Richard Boucher. Ms. Glaspie came under fire after Iraq released a transcript of a July 25, 1990, meeting with President Saddam Hussein in which she appeared meek in replying to his threats against Kuwait. A week later, Iraq invaded. Ms. Glaspie returned to Washington and after seven months remained silent about what happened. But in March she testified to a congressional committee that she had clearly warned President Saddam that the United States would defend its vital interests.

Equipment, relief supplies sent to Kurds

PARIS (AP) — France sent a mobile water treatment plant and 600 tonnes of food, blankets, tents and medical supplies Friday to aid Kurdish refugees. The water treatment plant, put at the disposition of the government by the Societe Lyonnaise des Eaux, will provide some 20,000 refugees with five litres of drinking water daily. Relief workers say the lack of clean water is the major factor causing the death of about 500 refugees a day. Water-related maladies including diarrhoea and dehydration are taking a heavy toll among children in particular.

Walesa to visit Israel in May

GDANSK, Poland (R) — President Lech Walesa will visit Israel next month, his spokesman said Friday as the Polish leader returned from a four-day state visit to Britain. Spokesman Andrzej Drzyzinski said the May 20-23 visit would be important for Mr. Walesa, the former Solidarity trade union leader elected state president last December. Israeli Ambassador Miron Gordon said last month that he hoped the visit, the first by a Polish president to the Jewish state, would help to overcome the "problem of anti-semitism" in Poland.

Pakistan resumes train service with Iran

ISLAMABAD (R) — Pakistan resumed a train service to the eastern Iranian town of Zahidan Friday after a 20-year gap in a move aimed at boosting trade. The Zahidan Express will initially run once a week from the south-western Pakistani town of Quetta but could become a daily service in the future, the PPI news agency quoted Railways Ministry Secretary S.R. Poonegar as saying. The Quetta-Zahidan railway section would transport Iranian imports to Zahidan through the Pakistani port of Karachi as well as exports from Iran by the same route, he said.

American killed in Turkey

ANKARA (AP) — An Iraqi-American died when his car fell off the road into the Zap River near the refugee camps on the Turkey-Iraq border, a car rental company official said here Saturday. The man, who died on Wednesday, was identified as Siham Alcaas Toma, 44, an engineer from Chicago, the Hertz company officials said. His wife and other relatives were informed of the death, they added. An official at the hotel where he stayed for two nights here before hiring the car said the man was desperate to go to Cukurova, on the Iraqi border, where about 185,000 Iraqi Kurds have taken refuge.

Kabul says troops kill 400 rebels

ISLAMABAD (R) — The Soviet-backed Afghan authorities said Friday government troops killed 400 rebels and captured their base in the eastern province of Logar. They also seized tanks and rockets from radical guerrilla leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-i-Islami party base in Logar's Tangi Waghjan region, Kabul Radio said. The broadcast, monitored in the Pakistan capital Islamabad, said a number of Pakistani soldiers helping the rebels were among those killed in the operation which it said began on Monday. No independent confirmation of the report was available. If true, it would be the first significant Kabul victory after rebels seized the eastern garrison town of Khost on March 31. Pakistan denies Afghan charges that its armed forces are helping the rebels.

Suharto to go on pilgrimage this year

JAKARTA (AP) — President Suharto and his family will go on a religious pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia this year, the pro-government daily Suara Karya reported Saturday. Indonesia's leading muslim preacher, Zainuddin M.Z., called on an audience of about 60,000 Muslims in the country's northernmost province of Aceh on Thursday to pray for Mr. Suharto's safety during the June pilgrimage, the newspaper said. Government officials have yet to confirm reports of the president's planned trip. But Mohammad Abdul Yamani, an envoy from Saudi Arabia's King Fahd, said earlier this year that Mr. Suharto had accepted a Saudi invitation to make the pilgrimage. Earlier this month, Religious Affairs Minister Munawir Sjadzeli led a team of parliamentarians and officials from the military, immigration, health and religious affairs ministries on a trip to Saudi Arabia "to prepare for Indonesian pilgrimage."

Mauritians march to support president

NOUAKCHOTT (R) — Tens of thousands of people marched in Mauritania in support of government plans to permit multi-party democracy, official sources said Saturday. The march on Friday evening was the biggest demonstration ever seen in Nouakchott, capital of this dusty, Sahelian country that is the bridge between black Africa and the Arab north. Soldiers at first tried to contain the demonstration, but later marchers shouting pro-democracy slogans approached to within 250 metres of the presidency. President Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmad Taya, Mauritania's military leader, earlier this month promised multi-party elections and a constitutional referendum this year.

Kuwait's stateless people — Unwanted and nowhere to go

By Greg Myre
The Associated Press

KUWAIT CITY — They are people without a true home: Kurds, Palestinians, Eritreans and the bedouins, those without nationality.

For decades they have come to Kuwait seeking refuge. Many ended up in the same run-down neighbourhood of Hawally, where streets are lined with rusting, burned-out cars, piles of rotting trash and empty shops.

Kuwait says it no longer wants so many foreigners, but many of the outsiders say they have nowhere else to go.

"I have lived in Kuwait my whole life and I still feel like a stranger," said Ali Agha, a handsome 31-year-old Kurd with a thick black mustache. A man of initiative, Agha has published his own plight and that of the Kurds by organising a demonstration outside the American embassy, visiting most of the Western embassies in town and writing to every international humanitarian group he knows seeking asylum.

So far, no one wants him. "Kuwait does not appreciate us, and I would be killed in Iraq," said Agha, whose father came to Kuwait from Iraq more than 30 years ago. "Tell me: where do I go?"

Kuwait relied on foreign workers to build the emirate, but has not allowed them to fully integrate. It is virtually impossible for foreigners to obtain citizenship.

Neighbourhoods are largely segregated between Kuwaitis with their large modern houses, and foreigners such as those in Hawally, who live in aging apartment blocks with peeling paint.

As it rebuilds from the Gulf war, Kuwait wants to slash the number of foreigners, who

accounted for almost 1.5 million of the two million people in the emirate before Iraq's invasion.

No official deportation programme has been announced, but the government has stressed that limiting foreigners is a priority.

Particularly vulnerable are those without a true homeland. — Most of the 350,000 Palestinians fled the emirate during the Iraqi occupation, and the remainder feel stigmatised because a small minority sympathised with Iraq.

"We are dying a slow death," said Ayda Jarad, a 31-year-old manager of a computer software firm. "I tell all Palestinians they should leave the country because things will only get worse."

Palestinians have been the target of retribution by Kuwait security forces and vigilantes. On separate occasions in recent weeks, men in army uniforms and vehicles have sprayed the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) offices with gunfire and ripped down signs on the front wall.

Palestinians are prominent as business managers, bankers, teachers, engineers and technicians, but say their efforts are not adequately appreciated by Kuwaitis.

— Kurds number about 5,000 and most carry Iraqi passports. Citing the current Kurdish refugee crisis, they say they will remain abroad until Saddam Hussein's rule ends and an independent state of Kurdistan is carved out of territory in Iraq, Turkey and Iran.

But life in Kuwait is getting more difficult, even if they are not formally told to leave.

Kurds, say.

"Kuwait doesn't want to offend Arab countries that helped in the war against Saddam," said Khalil Salih, a Kurdish businessman. "But no one protects the Kurds, and the Kuwaitis will make our life very tough until we decide to go on our own."

— At a community house on the edge of Hawally, a faded blue sign welcomes visitors to the offices of the Eritrean Liberation Front, a rebel group fighting for autonomy against the Ethiopia's Marxist government.

"We don't fix the sign because we always think we will be going home soon," said Hassan Sheikh Ali Dime, a 28-year-old accountant who has been in Kuwait 11 years. Most of the 2,000 Eritreans fled Kuwait during the Iraqi occupation and are not expected to be allowed back. Dime says he misses his friends, but hopes to join them soon.

"All the Iraqis were driven out of Kuwait," said Dime. "All the Ethiopians will be driven out of Eritrea."

— Bedouin — Arabic word for without — also is the name given to tens of thousands of the poorest, least educated Kuwaiti residents who have no nationality.

Most are descended from the bedouins, the nomads of desert. They have settled in towns, and make up close to half of Kuwait's 20,000-man army.

But government censorship has barred even the mention of bedouin in the media. On their identification documents, the space next to "nationality" is simply left blank.

"We are really Kuwaitis," said a bedouin who identified himself only as Ali. "But we are the only Kuwaitis without money."

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 77111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
18:00	Cartoons
18:15	L'ecole de Paris
19:00	News in French
19:15	Strategic
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Mother and Son
21:18	All our Children
22:00	News in English
22:20	Paradise
PRAYER TIMES	
04:34	Fajr
05:49	(Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:53	Dhuhr
16:12	Asr
19:18	Maghreb
20:42	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifish Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624390	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terresanta Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 625443	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 671331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261	
Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751	
Assyrian International Church Tel. 685326	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932	
The Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
It will be partly cloudy and there will be a chance for scattered showers of rain. Winds will be northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, it will be dusty and	

partly cloudy with northerly moderate winds and calm seas.	
Min/max. temp.	
Amman	16 / 28
Aqaba	22 / 33
Deserts	18 / 31
Jordan Valley	20 / 30

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Anwar Agabawi	642696
Dr. Khalid Mu'addi	743500
Dr. Salah Al 'Ussud	649028
Dr. Khalil Al Jabali	740740
Firas pharmacy	661912
Perdows pharmacy	776336
Al Asena pharmacy	637055
Natroukhi pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shmeisani pharmacy	637660

IRBID:	
Dr. Mazen Hourya	(—)
Al Sharaa pharmacy	275825

ZARQA:	
Dr. Issa Al Omari	(—)
Khalil pharmacy	985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	630341
Rescue	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Dr. Mazen Hourya	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	891228
Blood Bank	775123
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	886390
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	603800
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	669131
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	787111

Telephone Information	121
Overseas Calls	016230
Central Amman Telephone	623101
Repairs	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	771111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	680100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power	
Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport	08-53200

Central Amman Telephone	
Repairs	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	774111

Jordan, Canada discuss assistance

AMMAN (J.T.) — A five-member delegation from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has opened talks with officials at the Ministry of Planning to determine the best areas in which Jordanian-Canadian cooperation can be pursued in the light of an earlier agreement to provide Jordan with Canadian economic assistance.

The delegation is led by Susan Laporte, CIDA's director of programmes at the Middle East Bureau, who met Saturday with Minister of Industry and Trade and Acting Minister of Planning Ziyad Fariz to discuss the Canadian aid.

Ministry of Planning Secretary General Salwan Touqan told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the talks covered means of channelling Canada's assistance to the Kingdom to help it carry out the economic restructuring programme in the wake of the Gulf war, which had a negative impact on the Jordanian economy.

Prospects for Jordanian exports to Canada, Canada's contributions to develop the Jordanian agricultural, water, communications, tourism and energy sectors were other topics of importance discussed at the meeting.

Mr. Touqan said that the two sides reviewed Canada's food aid to the Kingdom and means of helping it develop its human resources through Canadian expertise.

Despite Canada's austerity budget for aid overseas, Ottawa is in fact increasing its volume of assistance to Jordan which is going through very special circumstances, according to the Canadian Embassy here.

The delegation members, who arrived in Amman Thursday and are scheduled to leave on Monday, will discuss with Jordanian officials Canada's development assistance programme to the Kingdom and related topics, an embassy official said.

He said that the talks were considered as a follow up to those conducted in Jordan during a visit here by Canadian Foreign Minister Joe Clark last month.

In January this year Canada granted Jordan 15 million Canadian dollars as part of Ottawa's promised aid to Jordan to help it offset part of the severe damages to its national economy as a result of the Gulf crisis.

The grant would finance Jordan's purchases of Canadian goods.

In November, last year, Canada announced that it was extending aid worth 26.5 million Canadian dollars to Jordan for the same purpose.

Dr. Touqan expressed Jordan's deep satisfaction with the Kingdom's ties with Canada and said that bilateral relations were particularly given a boost following His Majesty King Hussein's visit to Ottawa in 1989.

First shipment of phosphate to leave Jordan for Iran

AMMAN (J.T.) — The first shipment of Jordanian phosphate for Iran is due to leave the port of Aqaba during this week, according to an announcement by the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC).

The announcement said that the company had reached a trade deal with Iran to sell it 250,000 tonnes of phosphatic fertilisers during 1991.

The agreement was reached in February when it was announced that Iran would buy \$66 million worth of Jordanian phosphate during 1991.

The rock will be shipped to Iranian ports in monthly consignments until the whole amount of 250,000 tonnes has been shipped, JPMC said.

the announcement said. Jordan, for its part, is planning to import Iranian sulphur used in phosphate and other industries, according to JPMC sources.

The deal is the first between the two countries since they restored diplomatic ties on Jan. 15 this year, following a break of nearly 10 years during the Iran-Iraq war.

Jordanian-Iranian trade was also expected to pick up following the resumption of formal relations. Jordan maintained imports from Iran during the war and in 1989 it bought Iranian products worth more than JD 2 million, with most of the trade conducted overland via Turkey and Syria.

Pope sends message of solidarity, sympathy to the Muslim World

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Holiness Pope John Paul II has expressed his sympathy and solidarity with the Muslim World following the end of the Gulf war and on the occasion of Eid Al Fitr feast which was celebrated earlier this month at the end of the holy month of Ramadan.

A press release by the Apostolic delegation in Amman Saturday quoted the Pope as noting in a special message to the Islamic World that he was expressing solidarity, particularly this year, in view of the tragic events of the past month, during the Gulf war, with the people in the Middle East region.

The Pope's message expressed sympathy and solidarity in particular with those who have lost loved ones. "May this time of mourning be tempered by the awareness that God's mercy and love are without limit," the statement said.

It said: "To all Muslims throughout the world, I wish to express readiness on the part of the Catholic Church to work together with all people of good will to aid the victims of the war and to build a lasting peace in the Middle East."



Secretary-General at the Ministry of Tourism Nasri Atallah Saturday sees off a group of European tour operators and journalists who visited Jordan's touristic sites for the past week (Petra photo)

Tour operators, journalists leave Jordan with message: The Kingdom is safe for tourists

By Maha Addasi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Journalists and tour operators from all over Europe who came to Jordan on an all-expense paid familiarisation trip left Saturday after visiting touristic sites to get acquainted with the touristic sector in the Kingdom and convey the message that the country was safe to visit and had a great deal to offer.

Secretary-General at the Ministry of Tourism Nasri Atallah saw the group off and expressed hope that its visit would initiate cooperation between tourism agencies in Jordan and Europe to facilitate and encourage tourism to Jordan.

After the beginning of the Gulf crisis, on Aug. 2, the level of tourism in Jordan dropped by 100 per cent as many tourists questioned the safety of the region.

In order to boost tourism in Jordan, Ministry of Tourism, Royal Jordanian (RJ), tour agencies and Jordan's major hotels jointly organised and funded the week-long trip.

"The people on this familiarisation trip should go back to their countries and tell of what they saw," Mr. Atallah said. "I wish that those on the trip would mention the fact that it is safe here," he added.

"There was a great deal of negative coverage of the region in France," Sylvie Gollombat a French journalist said. "Now I know that what we saw was exaggerated far too much. It is very safe here," she said.

Some reasons for doubting the safety in the region were

pinpointed by the visitors.

"During the war I didn't know whether Jordan would be drawn in so I waited till the war was over before considering to come to Jordan," a British journalist, Susan Raven said. "Now after coming here I know that it is very safe."

According to Mr. Atallah, the purpose of this trip was not only to familiarise the European market with Jordan as a safe centre of tourism, but also to introduce a new programme of tourism in which tourists stay in Amman and visit Jordan's northern parts before embarking to Petra and Aqaba, in the south, where accommodation areas become extremely congested.

"Accommodations are plentiful in Amman," Mr. Atallah said. "So tourists who come to Jordan and visit sites in the north, like Umm Qais, will then come back to Amman and stay at one of its many hotels."

Projects to rebuild archaeological sites are underway in order to attract more tourists.

"The Temple of Hercules in Amman is one of the most important archaeological sites in the Middle East and it lies in central Amman," the person in charge of projects at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Tom Daily said. "By rebuilding that temple we will be giving tourists more to see in Amman," he added.

Mr. Daily said that USAID had committed \$600,000 for this project. The team working at the reconstruction of the

temple have started their second season of reconstruction on Saturday.

But no matter how many attractions are rebuilt in Amman, many tourists come to Jordan to immediately flock to the south, to Petra, without staying in Amman.

"I enjoyed seeing the northern parts of Jordan, but it is Petra that would be the reason for me to come back," Gerry Gyngeil, the administrative manager of a tour agency in London said.

That explains the approach people take when they plan to tour Jordan. "People hear so much about Petra before they come to Jordan that they want to fly straight to Aqaba and go to Petra as soon as they reach Jordan," Susan Bauer, the manager of a tour agency in Germany said.

"In fact, people have cancelled their trips to Jordan when they were unable to go straight to Petra and stay there at least two nights," she added.

To counteract the anticipated shortage in accommodations in Petra, the Forum Hotel there is expanding its size by adding 65 rooms, to be completed by October 1991.

Mr. Atallah, however, insists that tourists should spend more time in the north of Amman because there is more in Jordan than Petra.

"Petra is the jewel in the necklace of tourism in Jordan, and we want to polish the necklace holding that jewel," Mr. Atallah said.

Royal Jordanian airlines gave the group brochures on Jordan, Saturday, before the airline flew them home.

7,000 jobs available in building material industry

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian Union of Construction Materials Manufacturers Saturday announced the availability of 7,000 job vacancies at various factories manufacturing tiles, bricks and stone for building, and invited Jordanians to come forward and take over the jobs made vacant with the departure of a great number of non-Jordanians.

Yousef Huneiti, the union president, said that "now that the national economy is picking up again, these factories are in desperate need of Jordanians to take over the work of 15,000 non-Jordanian labourers who were employed before the Gulf crisis."

"Before the crisis only 10 per cent of the total number of the workers employed in the business were Jordanians," Mr. Huneiti said.

"Following the recent Labour Ministry's measures to give Jordanians the chance to take over work from non-Jordanians, and in the absence of the non-Jordanians who used to work in this business, factories are finding it hard to recruit local people," Mr. Huneiti said.

He said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the factories would be willing to cooperate with the ministry's Vocational Training Corporation to recruit people to work in the manufacture of construction materials.

Losses resulting from the Gulf crisis were so severe that a large part of the factories producing construction materials had to close. The closure was due to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia stopping importing these commodities from Jordan, said Mr. Huneiti.

"Before the crisis there were 3,000 such factories operating in Jordan and supplying products to the local market and the Arab countries, but during the crisis 1,500 closed down permanently, while the others continued to work at a very reduced level," Mr. Huneiti added.

Before the crisis, Jordan used to export construction material products worth JD 100 million to the Gulf countries, and it is hoped that new markets would be opened for Jordan because the local market can only absorb 25 per cent of the total production, Mr. Huneiti said.

Mr. Huneiti appealed to the Ministry of Industry and Trade to stop issuing licences to more factories to open and noted that many of those that were closed down were sold at a big loss.

Apart from the lack of sufficient number of Jordanians to work in the factories, this industry is facing another problem represented in the extra tax imposed on the cement production and introduced in 1989.

This tax, he said, has increased the cost of operations and it is

hoped that the government would rescind these laws in a bid to boost the factories work.

Mr. Huneiti also demanded that equipment used in the construction materials industry be exempted from customs duty because it forms an integral element in the development process in Jordan.

The Ministry of Labour's Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) had earlier announced programmes to train Jordanians in trades like dressmaking, and producing bricks and other materials used in construction, and training people to work in bakeries.

The Ministry of Labour has been cracking down on foreign labour and recently announced it would issue permits for jobs which no Jordanian can fill.

In the past week, the Labour Ministry embarked on an intensive campaign to find work for Jordanian drivers. A ministry statement said that as of this month the ministry would not issue permits for foreign workers to drive trucks in Jordan in a bid to find jobs for the Jordanian drivers.

It said that inspection teams would make sure that the new measures are implemented.

According to the Labour Ministry, the country has 996 non-Jordanian drivers employed by private transport companies in Jordan.

Cross-country walk proceeds to benefit MAP

AMMAN (J.T.) — Under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the honorary chairman of Jordan Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP) and Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath, MAP's sponsored walk shall take place on Friday, May 10, starting at Amra Hotel and ending at Al Rajaha Village on the outskirts of Wadi Sir.

The proceeds will benefit MAP's operations.

Participants include teams representing embassies, universities, schools, professional associations, companies, banks and clubs in addition to families and individuals.

The walk extends over sixteen kilometres, starting at Amra Hotel, past the Seventh and Eighth Circles, towards Khibet Sara, Abu Sous village and ends at Al Duma Hill, near Al Rajaha village which overlooks the Dead Sea, the Jordan Valley and the West Bank.

Ten stations are situated along the route where water and refreshment will be offered to participants.

Bus shall travel along the route to carry participants either to the end or starting point.

Police and ambulances shall be available in case of emergency.

Participants may join the special teams representing the different schools, clubs, companies, or otherwise join the "road-runners" team that shall be formed for individuals with previous arrangement with the organisers.

The walk ends at "Khaimat Baladna" where lunch, consisting of traditional foods and sweets, shall be on sale for participants and other visitors that may join at the end point by cars. Prizes shall be awarded to winners.

TCC to prosecute faulty subscribers

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Telecommunication Corporation (TCC) has resorted to the law in order to collect dues from subscribers whose telephone services have been permanently terminated, and, according to TCC Deputy Director for Financial Affairs Ahmad Munes, a total of JD 6 million is still to be settled.

Mr. Munes told Radio Jordan Saturday that telephone services to 13,500 subscribers had been terminated permanently following repeated warnings to settle their dues.

Last month, the TCC carried out an intensive campaign to collect its dues from subscribers in Amman and other governorates and said that more than JD 10 million were to be settled.

Mr. Munes said that nearly 7,800 subscribers had been

warned to settle their dues before final termination of services could take effect, and the warning came as temporary disruption of telephone services.

But Mr. Munes said that many of those in the latter group were expected to settle their dues.

Now, in accordance with the law, the TCC has the right to resort to the public prosecutor to

ensure the settlement of the dues because those who have defaulted had benefitted from the TCC services, but refused so far to pay their dues, Mr. Munes said.

In accordance with the law, the Ministry of Transport can resort to confiscating a person's property until the dues are settled.

CONDOLENCES

The Editor and staff of the Jordan Times deeply mourn the passing of

Mrs. Huda Al Amad

sister of their friend and colleague, Director-General of the Jordan Press Foundation (Al Ra'i & Jordan Times), Mr. Mohammad Al Amad.

May her soul rest in peace.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Cultural week at Yarmouk University

IRBID (Petra) — Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein, the activities of the cultural week of the Yarmouk University's Faculty of Arts will start Sunday in the campus. The activities of the week will include scientific and cultural seminars and several exhibitions.

Bids for schools building in Balqa

SALT (Petra) — The Balqa Governorate's Education Department will invite bids for constructing school buildings in several areas of the governorate. Department sources said the department's decision to construct these schools comes within the framework of plans to quit rented buildings and abolish the two-shift schools.

Holiday announced

AMMAN (Petra) — All ministries and public departments and institutions will not be working on May 1 in observance of Labour Day, according to a communique issued Wednesday by Prime Minister Mudar Badran.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITION

- ★ Exhibition of fine handicrafts, weavings, quilts, on Friday, at the Abu Jaber estate-Yadoudah (open: 10 a.m.-9 p.m.)
- ★ Dried flowers exhibition by Hind Kordi Nuweiran at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FILM

- ★ Feature film entitled "Fahrenheit" at the American Centre — 7:00 p.m.

Sudan says incoming aid should comply with country's, U.N.'s laws

AMMAN (J.T.) — Sudan said Saturday that the door was open for any country or organisation to offer the Sudanese people humanitarian assistance provided that such assistance was given in accordance with the country's laws and under U.N. sponsorship.

A statement issued by the Sudanese Embassy in Amman said that Sudan welcomed any assistance which would help the country overcome the present difficulty and until the emergency conditions have ended.

The statement said that the government had undertaken a programme of planting food on vast areas of land, but a gap in food supplies still existed. "The government of Sudan is determined to produce sufficient food for its people and to market part of the production abroad," the

statement added. According to the statement, the Sudanese government is pursuing intensive efforts with the world organisations and the United Nations to facilitate the flow of relief supplies to the Sudanese people.

Last Wednesday, the Sudanese government forecast food sufficiency this year and stressed that it was not facing famine, only a "food gap" which would be filled by measures already taken.

Relief officials in Khartoum said earlier that hundreds of thousands of people in southern Sudan, ravaged by nearly eight years of civil war and recurrent food shortages, may perish unless food is rushed to them.

Some 7.5 million in the whole country are believed to be in need

of urgent assistance of 1.2 million tonnes of supplies during 1991, relief officials said.

According to Reuter news agency, a proposed, U.N.-sponsored relief programme for the south, where 250,000 people died of hunger in 1988, was awaiting the government's go-ahead to start.

Sudan, Africa's largest country, consumes about 900,000 tonnes of wheat and 2.4 million tonnes of sorghum a year, according to estimates.

The country's crumbling transport system and chronic fuel shortage have in the past left pockets of hunger even during years of good harvest. The latest statistics put Sudan's population at 25 million people.

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Social Security CORP. Hotel and Tourism Dept.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
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Chairman of the Board of Directors:
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Director General:
MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:

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University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

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Game or self-destruction?

CHAIM WEIZMANN, the "father" of Israel, once had this to say about the Jews: "We're a small people but a great people, an ugly yet a beautiful people; a creative and a destructive people — a people in whom genius and folly are equally co-mingled. We're an impetuous people who have time and again repudiated and wrecked what our ancestors built. For God's sake let us not allow the breach in the wall to swallow us."

Weizmann could have easily directed his sermon to Foreign Minister David Levy and Defence Minister Moshe Arens who were yesterday fighting through the airwaves over what the former reportedly agreed to during his talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

Levy did not agree to much of what the secretary of state had apparently sought. He did not answer two important questions concerning Palestinian representation and the role of the U.N. in the proposed peace conference on the Middle East. Nor in fact did his prime minister, Yitzhak Shamir, do so. This of course must have prompted the U.S. State Department's spokeswoman to issue her carefully worded statement which said that the burden of making progress towards holding the conference now rested with Israel.

The airwave tussle between the two Israeli ministers could not have been all that serious, considering the basic position that the Israeli cabinet has taken on the Baker mission and ideas. The more likely and logical explanation for it is that it is stage-managed for the obvious benefit of Israel — more precisely the Shamir cabinet — in its dealing with the Americans over the issue of the peace process. The hawkish Israeli housing minister, Ariel Sharon, tried such tactics as used by Arens against Levy before — most recently by bulldozing his way to erect and expand new settlements on the West Bank to put the secretary of state on the spot and further complicate his peace talks while in Israel. In that process Sharon picked a fight with Levy by opening up a front in the ruling Likud Bloc that is directly aimed at undermining the influence the foreign minister has within the central committee of that body.

In the final analysis, Israeli political insiders say, the infighting among the ministerial troika serves no other purpose than to allow the chief strategist of them all, Prime Minister Shamir, to be all things to all men, but especially to the Americans, who may be finally trying to pin him down on how far he is willing to go into the peace process.

It is probable Secretary Baker is becoming more and better aware of the Israeli game and is finding it more difficult to play. If this is the case, he has every right to go even beyond the statement his spokeswoman has made. If, on the other hand, the Israeli leaders are just being self-destructive, as their founding father indicated decades ago, Secretary Baker has a duty to save them from themselves.

In the archives of his department he would find an old advice from an old hand, veteran U.S. Ambassador J. Rives Childs who had these words to say in 1953: "We should announce to the Israelis that they cannot count upon our continued financial support unless they are prepared to entertain and implement some reasonable compromise with the Arabs, including respect for the decisions of the U.N. with regard to Israel. As long as we pour millions into Israel, how can we expect the Israelis to listen to reason? We should say to them very frankly, either you will decide to abide by the decisions of the U.N. and come to terms with the Arabs or you cannot continue to expect our financial aid."

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

President Bush's expression of optimism over the ongoing efforts to bring peace to the Middle East, is not justified simply because Israel has not displayed any intention of recognising the rights of the Palestinian people or a commitment to the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Saturday. So far nothing concrete has come out of the Baker shuttle diplomacy; and a mere agreement on holding negotiations, does not mean progress towards reaching a lasting peace based on justice, said the paper. The only guarantee for the aspired peace, the paper noted, is Israel's commitment to respect the international legitimacy and implement U.N. Security Council resolutions which enable the Palestinian people to regain their national rights in their own homeland. There is a difference between negotiations over the implementation of these resolutions, which should be done; and negotiations over the international legitimacy itself, said the paper. It said that sitting at the negotiating table is not an end by itself, but a means to achieve the end, which is the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 which provide for the exchange of land for peace. The paper said that as much as Bush has a right to feel optimistic, the Arabs have the right to learn about the basis for such optimism, and to know whether the United States has gone back on its pledges to implement the international legitimacy or there really is cause for such optimism on the ground that Israel has displayed genuine intention of moving ahead towards peace.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily believes that among the defeated nations in the Gulf war were Germany and Japan which displayed total subjugation to Washington. Fahd Al Fanek says the war has of course ended with a sweeping defeat for Iraq, with the United States achieving military victory which, he notes, could be turned into a political catastrophe for President Bush should guerrilla warfare start in view of the presence of British and American troops in northern Iraq. The Soviet Union also tasted defeat with the beginning of the dismantling of the Soviet Empire by President Gorbachev while China's defeat started long before that, when it lost a role as a leader of the Third World countries and transformed itself into a supporter of U.S. actions, the writer notes. He says that Germany which was expected to emerge as a major world power has regrettably turned itself into a dwarf, responding favourably to Washington's desires and succumbing to Israel's insults.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Urgent economic decisions we failed to make

Following the end of Gulf War II, the government realised the need for a new futuristic vision to guide the path of Jordan's economy. A ministerial committee was formed to undertake the job. Since then we have not heard anything from or about this committee. There is no indication that the committee has met, or formulated new policies and proposed alternative options.

This transitional period is crucial in the determination of Jordan's economic future for years to come. The foundations are now taking shape for either an economic recovery and take off or another crisis similar to that of 1988.

The government looks almost paralysed. Its formula appears to be to "do nothing." It is trying to bury its head in the sand of the Japanese and European financial assistance that Jordan received through the influence of the American administration. The government failed to recognise the creeping problems. It is acting as if the flow of foreign aid will continue at the same level for years to come, which should make it possible to continue subsidising and appeasing everybody and all groups.

The major question that the government was expected to resolve is of course whether adjustment and reforms, interrupted by the Gulf crisis in the summer of 1990, will be resumed without further delay. But there are many other urgent decisions that are not being tackled despite the resulting distortions and direct losses.

The agricultural sector alone consumes around 70 per cent of the limited and scarce water resources. This year we don't even

have the bare minimum to accommodate the normal production at the Jordan Valley. The government's answer to this question is to offer the water at a fraction of its direct cost, thus preventing the rationing of its use as well as losing public funds in the process.

The Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) is run efficiently yet it is losing millions of Jordanian dinars every year, which are immediately covered by loans under the treasury guarantee. The government's answer to this problem is to lower the price of power produced by JEA and sold to electricity distributing companies, simply because such companies are privately owned and would not continue as a losing operation. But that government decision only provided an artificial solution at the expense of higher losses to JEA simply because it is a public sector corporation and the public sector is conditioned to live with deficit and not care about losses.

Fuel conservation is a high priority everywhere. This should be more true in Jordan which imports 99 per cent of its fuel needs. What did the government do towards solving this problem. The answer is obvious. The government lifted austerity measures, maintained pre-crisis low prices and started to subsidise fuel just as it did in the seventies.

The official economic literature in the economic development plans and the budget presentation addresses claims that rationing consumption and reduction of deficit are top priorities and public sector corporations should be self-sufficient and price their products on sound economic basis. It is astonishing how much the

government is verse in announcing the proper policies that should be followed but equally determined to go in the opposite direction when it comes to application of these policies in practice.

The failure of the government to start a gradual increase in the water prices is not only causing waste and distortion in the agricultural production but it is also depriving us from using \$50 million ready for disbursement to finance vital agricultural projects by the World Bank. The funds are withheld until the discrepancy is dealt with.

The government's failure to adjust electricity prices to reflect the actual cost is not only causing a waste of energy but it is also depriving Jordan from utilising another \$50 million ready for disbursement by the world Bank to finance our energy related projects provided we fix the pricing policy of energy.

The failure of the government in working out an updated economic adjustment programme and making the necessary reforms is not only causing more distortions and inviting crisis but also may deprive Jordan from receiving its fair share of foreign development aid which is tied to sound economic policies.

Some observers blame all the economic shortcomings and failures on democracy. This is not true. Democracy and public participation is the best environment to make the difficult decisions and share the responsibilities. For without democracy and freedom of expression the space occupied by this critical essay would be used to praise the government for unfounded achievements.

Ireland to seize chance for peace after 70 years?

By Paul Majendie
Reuters

DUBLIN. — Ireland, a divided island with a history steeped in bloodshed, now faces its best chance of permanent peace in 70 years.

Almost 8,000 people have died in one of the world's longest-running guerrilla conflicts and sectarian hatred is deep in British-ruled Northern Ireland.

But London's Northern Ireland Minister Peter Brooke has achieved the seemingly impossible — getting Protestant and Catholic politicians round a negotiating table.

Brooke will start talks with the province's political parties next Tuesday in a bid to end 17 years of direct rule from London and bring implacable foes together in a local power-sharing government.

The last power-sharing government collapsed in 1974 after just one year with a Protestant-inspired general strike by hard-liners in an unholy alliance with Protestant paramilitaries. Will Brooke succeed? History does not favour unbridled optimism in Northern Ireland. Three of his predecessors failed and the men of violence could still torpedo the best-laid plans of constitutional politicians.

But there is an unmistakable air of optimism on both sides of the border as Brooke prepares to meet unionists representing the one-million-strong Protestant majority and moderate nationalists from the 500,000-strong Catholic minority.

The Irish Times echoed those hopes: "the discussions may prove to be the most significant and far-reaching to have addressed relations between these two islands and between the parties in the north since the 1921 treaty negotiations."

Those negotiations heralded the birth of a nation in bloodshed. The treaty partitioned the island into the independent south and the British-ruled north. It sparked a bitter civil war in the south.

Northern Protestants, enjoying a 2-1 majority in Northern Ireland, have no wish to join a Catholic-dominated country where divorce and abortion are banned. In a united Ireland they would be outnumbered 4-1.

The north's nationalists, who launched a civil rights movement in 1969 for better jobs, housing and education, aspire to national unity but, as a first step, would like the unionists to agree to some form of local power-sharing.

The talks, scheduled to run for 10 weeks, are to have an added dimension with the

Dublin government being brought in to discuss North-South relations and ties between the two islands.

Irish Prime Minister Charles Haughey, a diehard republican who once called British-ruled Northern Ireland "a failed political entity," now says: "The European Community offers us an entirely new context in which to seek political progress in Ireland."

"In trying to chart a new path which will soften and eventually eliminate the divisions of the past on this island, we must intensify our efforts within the framework of a new Europe in which the unity of peoples is the major theme."

All sides will be working to improve and hopefully transcend the landmark 1985 Anglo-Irish agreement that gave Dublin a consultative voice in the daily running of Northern Ireland.

That agreement is loathed by the unionists who saw it as a British betrayal on the road to Irish unity. They are pushing for the Irish republic to drop the claim to Northern Ireland enshrined in its constitution.

That could be up for negotiation, Irish Foreign Minister Gerry Collins conceded last weekend. "We want to be flexible, we want to be understanding," he said.

There are many mountains to climb. Unionist Leader James Moynihan made that plain: "The union (with Britain) is not up for grabs. The union is not up for auction."

But the biggest problem could be the paramilitary extremists on both sides of the sectarian divide with the province now once more embroiled in a savage cycle of "tit-for-tat" killings.

Protestant extremists have promised to call a ceasefire from the start of the talks next week but nationalists are sceptical and cynical about the leaders' ability to control their gunmen.

The Irish Republican Army, fighting to oust Britain from Northern Ireland, responded by calling a limited and conditional ceasefire.

"Should these death squads become inactive, then the IRA will monitor the situation and act accordingly," said an IRA statement, which added that attacks on security forces would continue.

Sinn Fein, political wing of the IRA, has been excluded from the talks because it refuses to renounce violence.

The revolutionary party remains the voice of nationalism to many in the rundown ghettos of Belfast and its agreement will have to be won before Northern Ireland can enjoy lasting peace.

and marine corps jobs would be cut by Sept. 30, the end of the budget year. That will be the start of cuts totaling about 500,000 personnel by 1996.

Some in the defence department were pressing the army to take even bigger personnel cuts over the coming year, but army officials strongly objected and the idea was dropped.

G. Kim Wincup, the army's assistant secretary for manpower, wrote in a March 26 internal note to Deputy Defence Secretary Donald Atwood that returning Gulf war veterans "deserve a reprieve."

"They should not be expected



Iraqis, ravaged by war and rebellion, claw their way back

By Wafa Amr
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — The Shi'ite Muslim woman, veiled from head to toe in her black chador, pleaded with the merchant for a chocolate bar for the hungry son crying at her side.

The merchant wanted three dinars — about \$6 — for the moldy bar. The woman offered half a dinar — \$1 — "all the money I have."

"Have mercy on me, my child has not eaten chocolate for three months and he won't stop crying. Please, you know what it's like when you have children," the woman wailed.

The merchant ignored her. In Iraq, war has brought despair, humiliation and hunger. Despondency hangs like an invisible cloud over the capital.

The country is struggling to recover from the six-week allied bombing offensive in January and February, the lightning ground war that drove Iraqi troops from Kuwait and subsequent rebellions by Shi'ite Muslims and Kurds.

The country's infrastructure has been largely destroyed, either by the allies, the rebels or government forces that crushed the rebellions.

In Baghdad, there is little electricity. Baghdadis are chopping

down trees from their once-shady boulevards for fuel.

Water is scarce. Hundreds are said to be dying from drinking contaminated water from the muddy Tigris River that meanders through the capital. Waste is backed up in the ruined sewer system.

Gasoline is nearly impossible to obtain for most Iraqis, except the military and Baath Party officials. The allies estimated they knocked out 75 per cent of Iraq's refining capacity of 700,000 barrels a day.

Government crews are working around the clock to restore production in the bombed oil facilities.

Many Iraqis have lost family and friends, U.S. estimates are that up to 100,000 Iraqi soldiers were killed in the Gulf war. Iraqi officials have said 7,000 civilians were killed in the allied bombing.

No one knows how many people perished in the post-war rebellions. Some estimates put the death toll as high as 10,000.

If those estimates are anywhere near accurate, more Iraqis have been killed since August than died in the 1980-88 war with Iran. Military casualties alone in the conflict have been estimated at around 150,000.

Iraq's pre-war population was estimated at 18 million.

Now an estimated two-thirds of the 3.5 million Kurds are fleeing across the Turkish and Iranian borders. Hundreds of thousands of pro-Iranian Shi'ites have sought sanctuary in Iran.

In Basra and other southern cities like Karbala, Najaf and Al Amarah, all devastated in the ill-fated rebellions, there is no water, no electricity and no food. Living conditions are appalling.

The stench of sewage overflowing in the streets, and the decomposing corpses buried beneath the rubble of buildings, is nauseating and overpowering.

In Basra, ravaged in the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war and now pulverised again for the second time in a decade, doctors said hundreds of people have died from malnutrition, dehydration and contaminated food and water.

Women and children use makeshift wheelbarrows with battered plastic containers to draw polluted muddy water from the Shatt Al Arab waterway, the confluence of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers.

"People in the south are suffering tremendously," said Faisal Bakas, a pediatrician at Basra's Al Tahrir Hospital. "They're dying and there's nothing much we can do about it."

"The allied bombing completely destroyed the bridges in Al

Amarah and Basra so the government food trucks can't get through," said surgeon Mohammad al Hussein, another doctor at the hospital.

The rebels destroyed, burned or looted what was left in the government warehouses and the hospitals.

Dr. H. Jack Geiger of the City University Medical School in New York, who visited Baghdad for five days earlier this month as President of Physicians for Human Rights, said that seven per cent of the hundreds of children hospitalised with diarrhoea from drinking dirty water are dying because there are no proper facilities any more.

Even in fashionable areas of Baghdad, people cut down palm trees for firewood to cook. They carry the wood and palm fronds on their backs or in hand-pulled carts.

The more fortunate can afford kerosene-run generators to provide electricity for cooking and heating. But finding fuel is a full-time job.

"It's going to get worse," Dr. Geiger said. "They've been living off their reserves and those are about to run out. People are selling their possessions for food and they're at the end of their tether."

With Gulf war over, U.S. turns to shrinking military

By Robert Burns
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — By coincidence, the United States unveiled its plans for a streamlined military the day Iraq invaded Kuwait. Eight months later, the war with Iraq behind it, defence planners are looking anew at cutting back.

President George Bush's administration has been saying for more than a year that the military will become smaller.

Now, with the enormous Gulf buildup in fast reverse, it's becoming clear just how quickly the unfurled ranks will shrink.

The defence department decided earlier this month that about 60,000 army, navy, air force

to turn immediately to the task of positioning themselves to fend off" layoffs, the note said.

Fewer soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines will mean fewer military bases. Defence chiefs on April 12 proposed closing 31 major U.S. military installations, and it plans to announce shutdowns soon of many U.S. bases abroad.

Among the chief implications of this new thinking for the armed forces:

— A much greater proportion of U.S. forces will be based at home. The contingent of roughly 325,000 soldiers and airmen stationed in Europe during the cold war will be cut sharply, perhaps to below 100,000. Defence secret-

ary Dick Cheney recently said a "corps-sized force" of perhaps two army divisions, support elements and an undetermined number of air force close-air support aircraft would remain.

— More effort will be put into building ground-based defences — akin to the Patriot missile — against short-range ballistic missiles of the sort Iraq fired on Saudi Arabia and Israel during the Gulf war — less effort will go to developing space-based weapons against an all-out nuclear missile barrage.

— More forces will be put on standby condition, giving planners the option of rebuilding the fighting forces in the event of a major war. The army, for exam-

ple, plans to create two "cadre" divisions in the reserves, which would exist mostly on paper in peacetime but in a protracted crisis could be filled to strength and trained for war.

As the armed forces partially withdraw from Europe and slightly reduce their presence in South Korea over the next five years, they are likely to assume a bigger role in the Middle East.

As a result of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the administration is considering establishing a permanent air base in the Gulf area, the navy is likely to increase its traditional presence in the region and the army may undertake more joint exercises on the Arabian Peninsula with Saudi and other

Arab troops.

The new defence policy calls not only for smaller forces, but also for a switch in focus on the type of warfare those smaller forces should be prepared to fight.

All-out war with the Soviet Union in Western Europe is no longer the basis for U.S. defence planning, Cheney says. The new strategy puts a top priority on responding to smaller-scale conflicts in other regions.

"It is aimed primarily at taking advantage of what we believe to be a less threatening international environment in the years ahead," Cheney said recently.



Economic problems push Soviet opinion back to nuclear power

By Ron Popeski
Reuters

MOSCOW — Soviet public opinion, deeply shocked by the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, is grudgingly coming around to support nuclear power. As the extent of the country's tailspin sinks in, violent opposition to nuclear stations spawned by the bungled clean-up operation after the April 1986 accident is fading away.

Mass protests become fewer and fewer and local and national authorities quietly review decisions that closed down or halted construction at about a dozen sites throughout the country. "Chernobyl was a dreadful disaster and mistrust is still great though attitudes to nuclear power are generally improving," said Georgy Karov, head of the nuclear public opinion centre responsible for promoting nuclear energy.

"Of course, when a decision is taken to build a power station there is still some resistance. But life has put us in such a position that the energy question has to be addressed."

The anti-nuclear campaign reached a peak last year as the extent of negligence and incompetence after Chernobyl became clear.

Tens of thousands of residents of the Ukraine and Byelorussia who had lived in contaminated areas for four years were at last moved from their homes. Hundreds of thousands of people re-

mained under medical surveillance.

The Ukrainian parliament voted to close Chernobyl and to devise a programme that would eliminate nuclear power.

A high-profile campaign halted construction of a power station in the Crimea — an area of outstanding natural beauty dependent on tourism. Another reactor at Rostov-on-Don virtually ready to go on stream was among those stopped.

But since late last year, with President Mikhail Gorbachev trying to steer the country by decree and anti-crisis measures and consumers unable to buy virtually anything in shops, the mood has shifted.

Karov's network of information centres drawing on 12 ministries appears to be swaying public opinion.

Authorities candidly acknowledge past shortcomings and fully report incidents at power stations. Moscow played a major role in setting up two years ago the world association of nuclear operators to exchange international experience.

A shift away from the Chernobyl-type RBMK reactor in favour of smaller pressurised water units commonly used in the West is intended to help win public confidence.

Soviet television campaigns in favour of nuclear power, drawing heavily, though unsubtly, on France as an example of how residents of prosperous villages live happily alongside power sta-

tions.

Even ecological activists admit the campaign has made considerable headway.

"Two years ago, any suggestion we should put the economy first and forget about ecology would have been dismissed out of hand," said Vadim Daumye of the Nascent Soviet Greens Party. "Now things in the country are so bad that all ecological issues have been pushed off the agenda."

Daumye accuses authorities of exaggerating energy shortages to win back support for their stalled nuclear programme.

The oil industry, the country's largest foreign currency earner through the 1970s and 1980s, is in crisis, with production falling sharply. Coal resources are limited and pollution linked with thermal stations is increasingly blamed for huge environmental problems.

Natural gas, though still plentiful, will start to run out next century. Hydro-electric power, used to great advantage in other countries, is undeveloped and viewed as impractical in a country spanning thousands of kilometres from end to end.

The Kremlin has delayed publication of an energy programme for nearly two years — the 10th draft is due to go before parliament in coming months.

Studies show that unless the current power output of 280 million kilowatts a year is quickly increased shortages will occur early next century.

Planners point to increasing nuclear's 12.5 per cent share of the output. That, they say, means bringing on stream at least seven average-sized reactors within the next five years and a further seven to 12 by the end of the decade.

Since late last year, power shortages have prompted authorities in Voronezh in Southern Russia to authorise construction of two new reactors — despite a 94 per cent vote against nuclear power in a local referendum.

Decisions to proceed with new stations or expand existing ones were taken in Tver, north of Moscow, Magadan in the far east and Chelyabinsk in the Urals.

In Armenia, authorities fearing new energy blockades by neighbouring Azerbaijan are considering reopening a nuclear plant closed after the disastrous 1988 earthquake.

Even in separatist Lithuania, site of some of the country's biggest demonstrations, the government has agreed to discuss construction of a third reactor at its Ignalina plant.

Karov has found the most unlikely allies to promote growth in the nuclear industry.

"For instance at the Kholmitsky station in the western Ukraine, local church leaders came to bless the station," he said.

"Of course, it's ironical that after all these years we have the church helping us, but we have to use whatever means we can."



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Baker puts onus on Israel

(Continued from page 1)

direct talks between the Jewish state and the Arabs.

Ms. Tutwiler refused to say whether Baker had made any demands on the Arabs, especially Syria, or whether he had accepted proposals put forward by Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy, as Israeli officials claimed.

She said the questions Israel still had to answer involved operational details of a peace conference, such as how long it would run and whether the United Nations should play a role.

The Israeli officials said that in talks with Mr. Baker on Friday Foreign Minister David Levy agreed to five points on the format of the peace conference.

Mr. Arens, a rival with Mr. Levy for leadership of the rightist Likud, said: "I was not at the meeting with the foreign minister, but I presume that final agreement will have to be accepted by the cabinet."

"From the point of view of reaching an Israeli position, in the end this must be agreed on with the prime minister, and as you know, Baker's discussion with the prime minister did not finish and no conclusion was reached," he told Israeli radio.

Foreign ministry officials said Mr. Baker and Mr. Levy did not discuss two key issues that could torpedo the U.S. effort — a role for the United Nations and the composition of a Palestinian delegation to a peace conference.

Israel opposes roles for the United Nations and Palestinians from Arab Jerusalem. The officials said Israel accepted Soviet co-sponsorship of a peace conference if Moscow restored ties with the Jewish State, and Israel would consider giving Europe a role which has yet to be specified.

They also said that on the assumption the conference would have no authority to impose decisions, Israel would "favourably consider" letting it

reconvene with Israeli and Arab agreement to hear progress reports on bilateral negotiations. Israel had previously said it wanted a ceremonial opening to the regional conference which would then break up into direct talks between it and Arab states.

Mr. Levy's slight concession provoked criticism from Mr. Arens and right-wing parties in Mr. Shamir's coalition who fear Israel might be dragged into an international conference which would force it to give up occupied Arab territories.

"It started as a one-time event with the participation of the United States and the Soviet Union," Mr. Arens said.

"Today they want to change the name from a meeting to a conference. Today they want to add European representatives to this conference. Today they want to add an observer from the United Nations to this conference. Today they want our agreement that this meeting will convene again and it is no longer a one-time event."

"Thus it seems to me that the distance is diminishing between what is proposed here and a full international conference to which we will not go under any circumstances," he said.

Mr. Arens also said he favoured speaking with elected Palestinian representatives, as proposed in a moribund 1989 Israeli plan, rather than appointed delegates as envisaged at a regional peace conference.

He said that for the sake of policy coordination it would be better for Israeli leaders to meet Mr. Baker together rather than separately as they have done on each of Mr. Baker's four visits since early March.

During Mr. Baker's second Middle East peace mission Mr. Levy announced that Israel and the United States had reached broad understanding on an Arab-Israeli peace conference. Talks with Mr. Shamir later that day revealed many obstacles remained.

Mr. Arens Saturday appeared to

turn the tables on Mr. Levy, who has adopted a more conciliatory approach to peace efforts since replacing Mr. Arens as foreign minister last June.

In the previous government, Mr. Arens was the one who tried to coax Mr. Shamir into talks with Palestinians while Mr. Levy worked to undermine the process by pushing hardline Israeli demands.

Hardline Science Minister Yuval Neeman said he was concerned by media reports of new accords with Mr. Baker but would wait to hear from Mr. Shamir and Mr. Levy in the cabinet before deciding what action his ultra-rightwing Tzohar party would take.

"If indeed things are as reported, I think it will be hard for Tzohar to stay in the government," he told army radio.

Tzohar, fiercely opposed to trading land for peace with Arabs, controls three parliamentary seats in Mr. Shamir's 66-seat coalition. Tzohar's central committee is to meet this week to discuss the peace efforts.

France wants big power talks

(Continued from page 1)

general said that the two U.N. convoys teams "will also discuss modalities for the take-over, in due course, of the camps presently being set up by American, British and French forces in northern Iraq."

On that basis, he said, a plan of action will be prepared for his approval and immediate implementation will follow.

He said the latest figure of displaced persons is 1.02 million in Iraq, 416,000 just inside Turkey at the border with Iraq and 200,000 to 400,000 refugees on the Iraqi side of the frontier.

In Washington, White House deputy press secretary Roman Popadiuk said Mr. Perez de Cuellar's comments "underscore the important role the U.N. will be doing in alleviating the suffering

of the refugees. We will continue working with the U.N. for the eventual turnover of the future camps."

But President George Bush said U.S. troops would remain in northern Iraq as long as they were needed, which may pose a problem for the U.N. in taking full charge of the camps.

The United States says its presence is covered by Security Council Resolution 688 that demands Iraq allow aid groups to deliver relief to those in need but several senior U.N. officials argue that the resolution did not authorise troops.

Consequently they say that the United Nations cannot formally take charge of the camps while U.S. and allied troops are on base without another resolution though a gradual U.N. presence is expected.

Diplomat denies Karrubi made deal

(Continued from page 1)

of the U.N. Central Intelligence Agency and died in 1987.

Political analysts have said the hostage issue, especially last-minute jockeying that failed on the election eve, helped Mr. Reagan achieve a landslide victory over Mr. Carter.

The hostages were released Jan. 31, 1981, just minutes after Mr. Reagan was sworn in as president. The United States released some Iranian assets in return.

Mr. Nabavi said the hostages left Iran before Mr. Reagan actually took over the White House.

Mr. Nabavi said Iran wanted to free the hostages in October after the Majlis (parliament) voted a series of conditions, but haggling

prevented the release until January.

He said the election in fact delayed the release because Iran's proposals were "not dealt with effectively" out of fear they would become an election issue.

"We were after mechanisms so that we would be able to get financial guarantees from the U.S. before the release of the spies and our proposal led to a month-long halt in negotiations," Mr. Nabavi said.

He said he worked under the impression that Mr. Carter was pressing for their early release to help his campaign.

"Whether Mr. Carter would have won the presidential election, if the issue of American hostages had been settled, is not

clear," he said.

The most influential Shiite Muslim cleric in Lebanon, Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah, said in remarks published Saturday that the issue of the 13 Westerners missing in Lebanon has "reached an advanced stage of ripeness."

Also Saturday, the leftist Beirut newspaper Al Safir accused U.S. President George Bush of banning financial aid from wealthy nations to Lebanon pending the release of the Western hostages.

"I believe that this issue has reached an advanced stage of ripeness, but it will not be discussed in Lebanon," Sheikh Fadlallah said in answering an interviewer's question on the issue of the Western hostages.

U.S. begins refugee airlift

(Continued from page 1)

United States clearance to send aid and the first of the U.S. air force plane landed in Tehran Saturday with blankets for the refugees.

It will be only the second time an American plane has been permitted into Iran since 1979, when 52 U.S. diplomats were seized and held captive by revolutionaries for 444 days.

Several American transport planes and helicopters took part in a botched hostage rescue effort

in 1980. Eight Americans died when a cargo plane and helicopter collided on a makeshift airstrip in the desert southwest of Tehran.

Iranian authorities sought to downplay the significance of the American aid.

IRNA described the aid as an "ordinary practice" and stressed the plane would "return immediately after unloading its cargo."

The cargo plane, painted in dark-green camouflage colours, had an American flag painted prominently on its tail.

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U.S. sinks deeper in recession

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. economy shrank at a 2.8 per cent annual rate in the first three months of 1991, hobbled by a recession that permeated nearly every sector of business activity, the Commerce Department said Friday.

The contraction of gross national product (GNP) — the country's total output of goods and services — followed a 1.6 per cent decline in the final quarter of 1990. It was the first time in nine years that GNP in the world's largest economy fell in two consecutive quarters.

The sharp drop, coupled with recent reports on growing unemployment numbers and declining car sales, is likely to heighten pressure on the nation's central bank, the Federal Reserve (Fed), to lower rates to spark up the

economy, analysts said. "No way is this downturn short, shallow and mild," said economist Allen Sinai of the Boston Co. "At this point we're in the tenth month of recession."

But some economists, Bush administration officials and many Fed officials believe the worst of the downturn is over and expect a recovery, albeit a modest one, to begin midyear. "We think that the trough will be reached during the second quarter," Commerce Undersecretary Michael Darby said.

Federal Reserve Governor David Mullins said there were no major surprises in the GNP report and that the Fed knew the economy was still contracting in the first quarter, though at a slower rate.

"We still think we have a good

shot at a recovery," Mullins said. Mullins also said he was not surprised by the inflation numbers in the report which showed the implicit price deflator, a broad measure of price changes in a basket of goods and services, rose at a 5.5 per cent annual rate after a 2.8 per cent rise in the fourth quarter.

Economists said the deflator showed an exaggerated inflation picture because of distortions from a number of factors that are unlikely to be repeated in the future.

However, Mullins said the Fed is still sensitive to concerns about a resurgence of inflation. The Fed is in a "wait-and-see" mode now. "We're keeping our options open," he said.

The recession, which officially began last July, has bled 1.8

million jobs out of the economy since September and has already lasted as long as the average post-war downturn.

While economists do not expect the current slump to be as steep as the 1981-82 recession, considered may be anaemic.

They point to cautious spending by consumers and businesses, lagging productivity and overseas economic weakness.

"I'd say the recovery itself is going to be on the subdued side," said economist Robert Dederick of Northern Trust Co. in Chicago.

The current slump ended 92 months of economic expansion, a peacetime record that lasted through most of the 1980s and was only briefly interrupted by a minor downturn in 1986.

World Bank unveils new effort to promote the private sector

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The World Bank Friday unveiled a series of measures to help promote private sector development and head off criticism by the United States that the lending institution is not doing enough to foster market economies.

World Bank President Barber Conable, meeting with reporters in conjunction with a spring meeting of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, said there should be a balance between government and the market in promoting development.

"Governments throughout the world have come to recognise that the most efficient allocation and use of resources is achieved through the marketplace," Conable said.

He said the bank's central objective must be to reduce poverty and promote growth and that the private sector can be a main player in this effort.

The bank and its affiliate that promotes private development, the International Finance Corp., have been under attack by the Bush administration for not doing enough to aid countries in the difficult and complex task of privatisation.

Eastern Europe, in particular, has been in an historic switch to a market economy, including attempting to take its public, centrally planned companies, private. Latin America is going through some of the same reforms, as is Africa.

The United States has said that unless the bank and its affiliates did more for the private sector, it might not be able to support a new capitalisation for the IFC. IFC officials have complained

that a lack of money is slowing efforts to make new investments in the developing world and has sought an increase of \$1.3 billion from its 140 member-countries. By its charter, the World Bank can only lend directly to governments or government sponsored institutions. But as part of the new measures to encourage private business, Conable said the bank would become more directly involved with helping the private sector by cooperating more closely with the IFC.

In addition, he said the bank would revitalise a private sector development committee to provide guidance on private sector matters for the bank and its affiliates.

Moreover, the bank intended to review the economies of some 20 developing countries throughout the world to determine the size and effectiveness of the private sector and how to make it more efficient, he said.

It was uncertain whether the new measures go far enough to placate the United States, and allow it to give the go-ahead on a capital increase for the IFC.

"Only the United States has not joined (an IFC capital increase) consensus," Conable said, adding: "I hope we will see progress on this issue."

U.S. officials have said they would like to see the bank earmark 50 per cent of all its lending to help governments promote private sector development by the year 1995.

There have been suggestions that the bank be allowed to lend directly to the private sector in the way that commercial banks do now but this would require a change in its founding charter.

Conable said that setting artificial limits on lending would not be helpful and lead to attempts to disguise loans so that they appeared directed at the correct sector.

Moreover, he told reporters that many loans provided today including those for education, transportation and communications, are basic to helping the private sector and must be considered when discussing these issues.

Conable also said that the World Bank should examine how much a Third World nation spends on arms when considering making a loan to that country.

"The World Bank has to look at the level of military spending to determine the capacity of a country to deal with development issues (in case) there is a tremendous diversion of resources in unconstructive ways into military spending," Conable told a news conference Friday.

The bank is the biggest single source of aid to the Third World, lending over \$23 billion a year. Conable's predecessors have been wary of military issues, since the bank is owned by 155 countries and some of them are under military dictatorships.

Conable said the United Nations Development Programme will put out a report later this year suggesting ways of looking at the problem.

"Military spending is not purely a fiscal issue, because there's an emotional surcharge on it," he said. "But it does have fiscal consequences."

He added that each country has to be considered separately but that there are some rules of thumb that could be applied. He



Barber Conable

did not say what they were. But one former president of the bank, Robert McNamara, proposed in a speech Thursday that aid should depend on low military spending by the country that gets it.

"It is, I believe, an essential part of the solution to the waste represented by excessive military spending in poor countries," he said in a speech.

McNamara was U.S. secretary of defence under presidents John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. McNamara suggested that countries get special consideration if they spend less than \$2 a year on security out of every \$100 of their total production.

The U.S. arms control and disarmament agency lists 18 countries that spent \$10 or more out of every \$100 on security in 1988. They include Iraq, Libya, Syria, Israel, Jordan, Yemen and Vietnam.

Dozens of others spent more than \$2. A few spent less than \$1, including Brazil, Costa Rica, Nigeria, Gambia and Zaïre.

Ankara readies new dose of austerity

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkish businessmen expect a new dose of austerity next week as the government struggles with 62.3 per cent annual inflation and a ballooning budget deficit.

But a senior economy official said the measures would fall short of the belt-tightening urged by a strongly-worded International Monetary Fund (IMF) report.

"I don't agree with the IMF. We know our structural problems but for measures you need political will," treasury chief Namik Kemal Kilic told Reuters.

"Austerity hurts. Everybody knows the diseases. But we have

to be realistic. We can't change things overnight," he said. "A government facing an election can't impose a high dose of austerity into the economy."

"The IMF wants big changes, yes. But in this political atmosphere all we can try is a soft-landing," Kilic added.

"We can't see a week ahead. Early election speculations are not helping the market uncertainty," said Atilla Uras, general manager of Manufacturers Hanover Bank Istanbul.

Kilic said the new package would end agricultural subsidies.

The Turkish Grain Board paid over a billion dollars last year to farmers at above-the-market prices.

Central bank governor Rusdu Saracoglu, an Ozal protegee, hit at the government Thursday saying there was no point in announcing a monetary programme if public spending continued.

The budget deficit has already topped 2.9 trillion lira (\$829 million) in the first three months of the year, up 84 per cent over the same period of 1990.

Saracoglu is in favour of high interest rates — now at their highest since 1988 with key one-

year rates hitting 70 per cent — to bring down inflation.

But businessmen see high interest rates as a cause of inflation and say they paralyse investments.

High interest rates have also hit Istanbul's Stock Exchange. Share prices plunged Friday to their lowest since Jan. 29.

And ordinary Turks are finding that day-to-day problems are mounting as fast as inflation.

"There's nothing left of the middle class," wrote commentator Emin Colasan in mass circulation daily Hurriyet.

Salomon and Morgan Stanley report sharply higher earnings

NEW YORK (R) — Joining other U.S. brokerages that have profited from the bull market on Wall Street, Salomon Inc. and Morgan Stanley Group Inc. have reported sharply higher earnings for the first quarter.

New York-based Morgan Stanley said net earnings jumped 46 per cent to \$120.1 million, or \$2.07 a share, compared with \$82.2 million, or \$2.07 a share, a year ago.

Revenues grew 17 per cent to \$1.63 billion from \$1.40 billion. The brokerage said particularly strong results came in stock and bond trading, as well as from foreign exchange and commodities operations.

Salomon, also based in New

York, said net income more than doubled to \$273 million, or \$2.30 a share, from \$119 million, or 88 cents a share in the 1990 quarter.

Salomon cited excellent trading results in virtually all its products and geographic areas. Revenues soared 71 per cent to \$1.18 billion from \$690 million.

Profits at Salomon Bros., its main brokerage subsidiary, more than doubled to \$303 million before taxes.

Last week Merrill Lynch & Co., the nation's biggest brokerage house, reported first-quarter earnings rose more than fourfold, and Bear Stearns Co. reported a 66 per cent earnings gain in the latest quarter.

In addition to the surge in the stock market since January, which has boosted trading commission profits, the strong results are further proof that cost-cutting on Wall Street is improving financial results.

Saudi investor reveals 5 per cent Chase stake

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Saudi Arabian investor, Suliman Olayan, has disclosed he holds a five per cent stake in Chase Manhattan Corp., the nation's third largest banking company.

In a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Olayan said he has acquired 6.7 million shares of Chase "for investment purposes."

Olayan is the second Saudi investor in recent months to announce a substantial ownership stake in a U.S. bank.

Citicorp said in February Prince Al Waleed Ben Talal of Saudi Arabia purchased \$590 million of convertible preferred stock in a private placement. The prince stated he intends to limit his ownership in Citicorp to 10 per cent.

The two principal Olayan companies in the transactions, Crescent Diversified Ltd. and Crescent Securities Ltd., both based in the British Virgin Islands, indicated that depending on business developments they may sell their shares or buy more.

According to the document filed with the SEC, Olayan's companies since March 1 have purchased 1.1 million shares of Chase common stock at prices between \$15 and \$20 per share.

Carlson, Israel's Azorim sign hotel management pact

TEL AVIV (R) — U.S. hotels and resorts giant Carlson Company Inc. has signed a 10-year agreement with Israel's Azorim to manage and market Azorim's seaside apartment hotels.

Carlson is a privately held group that employed some 70,000 people in 1989 and earned revenue of more than \$6 billion. It will operate in Israel through its Colony Hotels and Resorts subsidiary. Colony president and chief executive officer John Russell told reporters: "This will be a good country to be in, particularly after 1992, with the fall of trade barriers."

Azorim's managing director Avigdor Kerner said Azorim — a real estate subsidiary of Israel's Clal Group — would profit from Carlson's expertise and worldwide reservation system. Azorim owns two Mediterranean coastal hotels and plans to open two more. It earned revenue of \$39 million in 1989.

Air France to lay off 1,500 workers

PARIS (R) — The French national airline group Air France plans to lay off 1,500 of its 39,000 employees this year as part of a cost-cutting programme, Chairman Bernard Attali was quoted on Saturday as saying.

Attali told the Paris daily Liberation that 600 jobs had already been shed. Workers were being laid off by early retirement, redundancy and non-renewal of contracts.

He said wage costs were a constant worry, with Asian airlines having wage bills 30 to 40 per cent lower than France's state-owned operation.

The contraction of business forced by the Gulf war also cost 3.3 billion francs (\$500 million) in lost business.

ADB predicts world economy to slow but pick up in 1992

MANILA (R) — World economic growth will fall for the third successive year in 1991 even if oil prices remain relatively low, but will pick up again in 1992, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has said in a report.

It forecast that Asia would again be the most rapidly developing region of the world, while the economies of eastern Europe and the Soviet Union would continue to contract as they ran the painful gauntlet of reform.

In its annual outlook report for 1991, the Manila-based bank said the Gulf conflict continued to have an impact on Asian economies because of lost remittances from workers in the Middle East and lower tourism revenues.

It forecast that growth in real world gross national product

(GNP) would fall to 1.0 per cent in 1991 from 1.7 per cent last year and 3.1 per cent in 1989 as major economies, particularly the United States, Germany and Japan, slowed.

"This projection assumes that oil prices will be about \$20 per barrel on average over the year and commodity prices will remain generally weak," said the report.

But it said that despite the slowdown in most industrialised countries, the economies of some developing states would pick up, particularly in Latin America where GNP growth is projected to hit an average 1.4 per cent in 1991, compared with negative growth last year.

It forecast that the U.S. economy would grow by just 0.5 per cent in 1991, but a recovery in the middle of the year would raise GNP growth to around 2.0 per

cent in 1992.

"Net (U.S.) exports should contribute to the recovery, as the dollar depreciation which took place in 1990 takes effect and import demand falls as disposable income growth weakens," the ADB said.

It expected German growth to outpace the average for the European Community (EC), which it projected at 1.4 per cent in 1991, against 2.5 per cent in 1990. But it said EC growth would pick up again in 1992, averaging 2.6 per cent.

Japan faces the problem of making the transition to a slower but more sustainable rate of economic growth — 3.1 per cent in 1991 — following three years of rapidly expanding income which has stretched capacity and created inflationary pressures," the bank said.

Jordan Times
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Deutschmark	389.1	391.4	Dutch guilder	345.6	347.7
Swiss franc	461.5	464.3	Swedish crown	112.1	112.8
			Italian lira (for 100)	52.7	53.0
			Belgian franc (for 10)	189.4	190.5

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Gorbachev blasts hardliners, prepares to confront strikers

MOSCOW (AP) — Mikhail Gorbachev is condemning Communist Party hardliners after defeating their attempt to force him out of the party's top job, reports said Saturday. But he also promises firm action to halt strikes and protests.

In a speech Friday to the party's Central Committee, the Soviet president said the party risks becoming politically isolated, and he called his hardline attackers "irresponsible" in their attempt a day earlier to oust him as party general-secretary.

He warned of the danger that "party organisations will occupy themselves exclusively with the settlement of internal party problems, and will remain... outside the main developments" of politics, the party daily Pravda reported Saturday.

He urged the Communist elite to "concentrate on helping the party show its ability as an active force in the implementation of the anti-crisis programmes," according to Pravda.

Gorbachev's continuing fury hinted of a break with the hardliners. So did the "anti-crisis" plan for salvaging the Soviet Union that he hammered out this week with the leaders of nine of the 15 republics, who want more power now held by the party and the central government.

The plan calls for rewriting the constitution, holding new elections, selling off small state-owned companies, speeding up creation of stock exchanges, and puts a moratorium on strikes and rallies.

Gorbachev promised firm action as soon as next week to halt strikes and restore plummeting production in basic industries and consumer goods.

Interior Minister Boris Pugo said in an interview Friday that

Gorbachev planned to impose a "special regime" involving economic measures, not troops, to restore sliding production. He would not elaborate.

On Friday evening, thousands of police and unarmed Interior Ministry troops closed off the centre of Moscow surrounding the Kremlin, in preparation for the May Day parade Wednesday and possible anti-government demonstrations. Dozens of water cannon and military vehicles were parked outside one end of the Kremlin.

Last May Day, tens of thousands of citizens poured into Red Square at the end of the official parade and shouted "resign" at Gorbachev and other leaders.

Gorbachev told the Soviet Supreme legislature Friday that the Central Committee "thought it was their duty to say... 'what are you sitting there for? we'll show you'.... So they could go back to their local organisations and say, 'we beat the hell out of him'...."

With slurred words and bags under his eyes, he explained that he lost his temper during the two-day party meeting and said he could not continue working with such a Central Committee, and suggested he resign.

"Then, they began thinking about what was happening," he said, turning slightly red and nearly shouting. The Central Committee voted 322-13 Thursday to support him, and Soviet newspapers Friday emphasised he had outmanoeuvred his hardline opponents.

To hardliners who want to reinstate the Communist monopoly on power, Gorbachev said, "society would not accept that," according to a TASS transcript.

Gorbachev received support Friday from the usually critical

legislature of Russia, headed by his rival, Boris Yeltsin. The law makers backed the plan Gorbachev negotiated Tuesday with Yeltsin and the leaders of the eight other republics that wish to remain united.

In Byelorussia, tens of thousands of striking workers went back to their factories, and others abandoned their blockade of a railway that had prompted the deployment of feared "black beret" riot troops.

Strike leaders said they were suspending the walkout until a May 21 legislative session because they feared authorities were trying to provoke violence as an excuse for imposing martial law, the independent Interfax News Agency said.

Striking coal miners in the Vorukta region in the far north agreed to go back to work after authorities met their demand for transfer of all the area's mines from the Kremlin to the Russian Republic's control, Interfax reported.

Hundreds of thousands of other striking coal miners, however, did not back off their demands for higher wages, more power for the republics and Gorbachev's resignation.

The plan approved by the nine republic leaders commits all sides to quick signing of a new union treaty, a new constitution six months after that, followed by new elections for the president and parliament.

The nine republics are the Russian Federation, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Tadzhikistan, Kirgizia and Turkmenia.

The six not included are Armenia, Georgia, Moldavia, and the three Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

De Klerk rejects ANC attack over prison releases

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South African President F.W. De Klerk dismissed as propaganda African National Congress (ANC) allegations that he was delaying key reforms.

Speaking Saturday on his return from a tour of Britain, Denmark and Ireland, De Klerk said their governments showed understanding of the "tremendous complexities" he faced in trying to dismantle apartheid.

There was a realisation that ultimatums by Nelson Mandela's anti-apartheid movement demanding key reforms by April 30 and May 9 were confrontational and "should be avoided," he said.

"The propaganda effort to create an image as if we are not performing in terms of our agreement is really without a factual basis," De Klerk told an air port news conference.

The ANC has threatened to pull out of power-sharing talks with De Klerk and consider resuming its suspended armed struggle unless political prisoners are freed and the return of exiles arranged by April 30 under an ANC-government agreement.

The ANC has set a second deadline of May 9 for another set of demands to be met, including the ending of township war and the dismissal of Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok and Defence Minister Magnus Malan.

Violence in black townships mainly between the ANC and the rival Inkatha Freedom Party has killed at least 600 people so far this year.

"We are absolutely on schedule with regard to question of political prisoners and with regard to the question of exiles," De Klerk said.

De Klerk said that on his tour, aimed at further easing South Africa's international isolation, he found a "realisation that confrontational ultimatums should be avoided."

"Note has been taken of the commission (investigating violence) which we intend to establish and the (multiparty) conference on violence which we have called for May 24."

De Klerk says less than 200 political prisoners remain in jail but the ANC, the largest black opposition group, says hundreds more are in captivity.

It says anti-ANC bias in the government bureaucracy is slowing the return of exiles. Up to 40,000 South Africans are in exile but only several hundred have returned.

De Klerk said that on his tour he did not ask for concrete pledges of new foreign investment in the sanctions-hit economy and therefore did not receive any. But new investment was nevertheless coming in, he added.

"On the plane a South African businessman told me he went over and came back with an additional \$40 million in orders. Another told me how his exports are growing," he said.

British banking sources in London said investors were concerned about township violence and were waiting for clearer signals of what political and economic structures would emerge in a post-apartheid government.

In Seoul, riot police fired tear gas and water cannons to drive back about 3,000 students trying to march out of Yonsei University to demand the resignation of cabinet ministers over the death.

Some students hurled fire-bombs and rocks to try to stop the police action, but the main group remained peaceful.

"Let's disclose the brutality of police by staging peaceful protests," shouted student leaders. Protests were held in at least two other cities, and radicals and dissidents vowed to stage week-long, nationwide protests condemning the killing and demanding the overthrow of the government.

In the provincial city of Kwangju, 300 students were driven back from a police substation by police firing blank shots, news reports said. The other protest was in the central city of Taejeon, reports said.

In parliament, Prime Minister Ro Jai-Bong said "The death occurred because some police used excessive violence." He said the cabinet would work swiftly to get the facts in the case and to prevent another such tragedy.

Home Minister Ahn Eun-Mo, who is in charge of police and security operations, was unable to testify in parliament because opposition politicians screamed and yelled, demanding that he leave the podium, news reports said.

About 35 groups, including three opposition parties and the nation's leading dissident organisations, held a news conference and denounced the death of the student, calling it a murder.

"The death is not an accident, but a systematic murder committed by the Korean government of President Roh Tae-Woo," they said in a statement.

Rocard visit is further sign of improved ties with N. Zealand

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — French Premier Michel Rocard arrives Monday for a three-day visit to New Zealand aimed at mending relations strained by the Rainbow Warrior sinking nearly six years ago.

It is the first visit to the South Pacific nation by a top French official since French secret service agents sank the Rainbow Warrior, the flagship of the environmental group Greenpeace, in Auckland Harbour on July 10, 1985. Greenpeace photographer Fernando Pereira drowned.

"This visit signifies the end of a period of tensions since the Rainbow Warrior," a source close to Rocard said in Paris. "The premier will sign a friendship treaty that will put this episode behind us once and for all."

New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger hopes Rocard's visit will lay the foundation for a new and constructive relationship.

The two countries continue to disagree over nuclear policy, but Bolger said they also have much in common: Shared interests in the South Pacific and Antarctica, environmental and trade matters.

"It will be very useful to discuss not only the many areas in which we can work together, but also those where we have differing views," Bolger said last week. Discussions will centre allow-



Michel Rocard

ing French territories and departments like New Caledonia and Polynesia to participate more fully in South Pacific regional affairs.

France also would like to open a privileged trade relationship with New Zealand that would allow the South Pacific nation greater access to the international arena, the French source said.

Neither side expects any major position shifts on the issue of French nuclear testing.

"We don't ask that the New Zealanders accept our nuclear testing, but we hope we can do other things with them, especially environmental work on Antarctica and the whales," the French source said.

3 hurt in Basque separatist attack

SAN SEBASTIAN, Spain (AP) — Suspected Basque separatists fired on soldiers and their relatives as they prepared for a military ceremony at an army base Saturday, injuring three people, police said.

The attackers, using at least one high-powered rifle with a telescopic sight, fired between four and seven shots at the army complex in this northern Basque

city, said police.

The attack came as the soldiers and their relatives were gathered in an open area for a ceremony pledging allegiance to the flag, said a police spokesman who declined identification.

No group immediately claimed responsibility.

But the spokesman said the attack appeared to be the work of the Basque separatist organisation ETA, which seeks independ-

ence from Spain for the three-province northern Basque region.

The injured included army Col. Jose Luis Garcia de Frias, 54, who was shot in the thigh, the spokesman said.

The group has claimed responsibility for killing nearly 700 people since beginning their violent campaign for independence in 1968. So far this year, ETA has claimed seven killings.

Fate of thousands of Indians are unknown after Costa Rica quake

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (Agencies) — The fate of thousands of Costa Rican Indians living in a remote jungle area near the epicentre of Monday's earthquake was unknown Friday and authorities said hundreds may have been killed.

"This may seem exaggerated, but we fear for the lives of 700 Indians," Mario Alvarado, an official at the government's National Commission of Indige-

nous Affairs, told Reuters in a telephone interview.

"Our fears are based on the degree of destruction we have been able to observe in the reserve areas after flying over the region in planes and helicopters," he said.

He added that whole mountaintops had collapsed in the quake.

Rescue teams had just begun to penetrate the dense jungle along

the banks of the Telire River where many of the Bribrí, Cabécar, Baribilla and Cocolí Indians were living when the quake hit, said Ulises Quezada, a spokesman for the Costa Rican Red Cross.

He said there was no word on what the rescue teams had discovered under the thick jungle canopy but added that Alvarado's fears were shared by many officials here.

Tornadoes kill at least 30 in U.S.

ANDOVER, Kansas (AP) — Tornadoes ripped through Kansas and Oklahoma, killing at least 30 people.

The twisters, which were reported across a wide area of south east Kansas and north eastern Oklahoma, chased legislators from the Kansas statehouse, damaged a hospital at an air force base and wrought devastation in Andover, Kansas, a town of 5,000 just east of Wichita.

At least 22 were killed there and 500 homes were damaged, Andover Mayor Jack Finlanon told reporters. Law enforcement officials weren't immediately able to confirm the death count.

"The south east part of town, especially the mobile home park, is completely leveled. The injuries are too numerous at this point to assess," Finlanon said.

The Golden Spur Mobile Home Park was leveled. Authorities planned to search for victims there throughout the night.

"There are still, we're afraid, injured people trapped," said Stan Cox, a Butler County sheriff's captain.

Harold Harris of Wichita watched a twister touch down on a farm northwest of town.

"We saw the tornado coming across the field," he said. "A barn disappeared and it tore the devil out of the house."

A sheriff's official in Sedgewick County, which includes Wichita, estimated that up to 200 people were taken to hospitals.

Kansas lawmakers were

ordered to evacuate the statehouse because of storms heading for Topeka.

Gov. Joan Finney has authorised National Guard troops and Kansas State Highway Patrolmen to go to the Wichita-Andover area for reinforcements.

Oklahoma authorities blamed tornadoes for at least three deaths in the northeastern part of that state.

One person died when a Tornado hit a street corner in Copan, in northeastern Oklahoma near the Kansas border, where cars "were rolled up like little balls," said Bartlesville shift chief Larry Topping.

Tornadoes also hit Nebraska and Louisiana.

Seoul MPs make first visit to North Korea

PANMUNJOM, Korea (AP) — A delegation of excited South Korean legislators crossed the border Saturday to visit archival North Korea, the first such visit in 46 years and a move seen as a possible step toward reunification.

The trip comes only a week after Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev visited South Korea for summit talks with President Roh Tae-Woo. Gorbachev and Roh pledged joint efforts to encourage Moscow-backed North Korea to open its doors.

The delegation's leader, Park Chung-Soo, said the group hopes to see North Korean Communist leader Kim Il Sung and convey a message from Roh asking for summit talks with Kim as soon as possible.

"We hope it will set the stage for national unification," Park, chairman of the parliament's Foreign Affairs and National Unification Committee, said of the visit. He hailed the trip as "meaningful and very, very significant."

The 25-member delegation includes 12 lawmakers, aides and reporters who are to attend an April 29-May 4 International Parliamentary Union (IPU) conference in North Korea's capital of Pyongyang. About 100 nations are expected to send delegates.

The South Korean group's visit is one of only a handful of civilian exchanges that have been permitted since the division of the Korean peninsula at the end of World War II into the capitalist South and Communist North.

Park and other delegates waved and smiled as they boarded North Korean cars and a

van to go northward. Many carried cameras, squeezed each other's hands and said the opportunity to travel to the North was a lifetime dream.

There were no signs of additional security beyond the regular border guards.

Park said Southern lawmakers would encourage their Northern counterparts to press their government to allow inspections of nuclear sites.

During the Gorbachev-Roh summit, the Soviet Union and South Korea called on the North to sign the nuclear safeguards treaty and allow international inspections of its nuclear facilities.

North Korea is reportedly building its third and largest nuclear reactor and may have the capability to build nuclear weapons by the mid-1990s.

"If Kim Il Sung wants to see us, we will convey our president's message that we want real peace and cooperation with the North, that he has no intention to isolate North Korea," Park said.

"So much could be solved if they meet together, he said. "It's an opportune time. The atmosphere is very favourable right now."

Park said the group also would encourage resumption of suspended high-level talks between the two sides, and would encourage North Korea to apply for separate membership in the United Nations this summer, along with South Korea.

The North has rejected separate membership, insisting that one seat should be shared by the two Koreas. South Korea calls the idea of a shared seat unworkable.

Kaifu arrives in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu arrived Saturday on the first leg of a 10-day tour of South East Asian nations.

Malaysian Foreign Ministry officials said Kaifu will meet with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad to discuss Mahathir's proposal for an East Asian economic grouping.

Mahathir made the proposal late last year, when international free trade negotiations broke down in Brussels after the United States and the European Community failed to agree on farm subsidies.

Mahathir has said those negotiations ignored the needs of other countries, and urged that a new group be formed to give South East Asia more clout.

U.S. officials have criticised the plan, saying it would only weaken existing forums.

Kaifu leaves Monday for an overnight stay in Brunei. He will then visit Thailand, Singapore and the Philippines, all of which

are members of the Association of South East Asian Nations, or ASEAN.

Kaifu is expected to make a policy speech outlining Japan's future role in the region on May 3 in Singapore.

He also was expected to discuss the Cambodian conflict, and to try to dispel fears of Japanese remilitarisation among Asian countries caused by Japan's decision to send minesweepers to the Gulf.

During an empire-building phase that started at the turn of the century, Japan forcibly took over most of East and South East Asia. Remembrance of cruel treatment at the hands of Japanese masters and the bloody World War II battles to oust them remain strong throughout the region.

The trip is Kaifu's first to each of the nations and his first meeting with the current leaders of Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore, a Foreign Ministry official said earlier this week.

COLUMN

Kangaroo testicles — a tasty little gourmet dish

SYDNEY (R) — Lightly sautéed kangaroo testicles are proving popular among women patrons of the old Willows Brewery Restaurant in South Australia. "When they first find out what they are a woman finds she can eat them, but a man squirms a bit," chef Wendy Brown told Reuters by telephone from the restaurant at Pichi Richi Pass, about 270 kilometres north of Adelaide. Flinders Ranges Fancies, or kangaroo testicles, come reasonably priced at three Australian dollars (\$2.30) for a plate of three. It's a tasty little gourmet dish — just lightly pan-fried so you still have the nice flavour," said Brown. The peculiarly Australian dish has the texture of an oyster and is an acquired taste, she said. "I tried them the second time and I think I would probably not try them the third time." Brown said she got the idea of serving kangaroo testicles after reading about Rocky Mountain oysters, or sheep testicles, in the United States.

China to send panda pair to 1992 Olympics

PEKING (AP) — China plans to loan a pair of giant pandas to Spain for the opening of the 1992 summer Olympics in Barcelona, an official report said. The mayor of Barcelona wrote to China last year asking for the pandas to "make the ceremony more colourful," the China Daily said. The two pandas will be on exhibit for three months at the Barcelona Zoo, which will be celebrating its 100th anniversary next year. The report did not say if Spain would pay for the use of the pandas. Zoos in the United States, Belgium, Australia and Japan have paid \$300,000 to \$500,000 to borrow pandas pairs for temporary exhibition. China's practice of loaning out its rare pandas, which face extinction in the wild, has come under fire. Pandas are native only to central and south-west China, and only about 1,100 pandas exist in the wild, down from 2,000 in 1977. In 1988, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service suspended issuance of import licenses that the transport of pandas because of objections from American conservationists that the transport of pandas exploited them for profit and interrupted efforts to breed them in China.

"The Chinese are running rent-a-panda schemes where they receive several thousand dollars for sending them to different zoos every three or four months," Dr. Ulysses Seal, a world expert on the breeding of rare animals, said last December at a meeting of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, one of the world's largest environmental organisations.

Senator accuses NBC
of sensationalism in planned expose
RICHMOND, Virginia (R) — Senator Charles Robb, son-in-law of the late U.S. President Lyndon Johnson and a possible presidential contender himself, has accused NBC News of reckless sensationalism in a planned sex and drugs expose concerning him. But the network said it was going ahead with the programme "Expose." It declined comment on the show's contents. Robb, 51, a conservative Virginia Democrat married to Johnson's daughter Lynda Bird, said the programme will allege that he committed adultery and knowingly attended cocaine parties — charges he totally denied. Robb challenged NBC's motives in airing such charges in an angry letter to network anchorman Tom Brokaw, who also is the host of "Expose." Meanwhile, another U.S. senator, New York Republican Alfonse D'Amato, accused the CBS television programme "60 Minutes" of planning to run a critical story on him and that CBS had denied him the right to rebut the story live on the show. CBS declined comment on the content of the piece.

Lavish wedding for Ozal son
ISTANBUL (R) — About 400 police with guard dogs surrounded a luxury new hotel in Istanbul Friday evening as chefs and entertainers prepared a lavish wedding for President Turgut Ozal's youngest son Efe. Turkish newspapers calculate that the party will cost at least \$500,000. Efe Ozal, who recently set up his own brokerage house on Istanbul's stock market, is marrying Zeynep, daughter of industrialist Alpaskan Besikcioglu.

Council to seek applicants for next U.N. chief

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.N. Security Council is about to ask potential candidates for the secretary-general's post to step forth so it can recommend a successor to Javier Perez de Cuellar in October, diplomats said.

But it not yet clear whether Perez de Cuellar will step down when his current five-year term expired at the end of this year.

Several delegations, including the British, French and Soviets, are said to be considering making an attempt to persuade the 71-year-old Perez de Cuellar to serve on for a partial term, perhaps for two years.

However, Perez de Cuellar said in January that 1991 would be "the 10th and final year of my tenure as secretary-general of the United Nations."

The Security Council is getting the search for a secretary-general under way by drafting a letter to all 159 member states asking them to notify the council of any worthy candidates for the post.

It is not known exactly when the letter will be sent, but it is expected to go out by mid-May.

The secretary-general, who receives \$183,000 a year, is responsible for running the 14,000-strong U.N. staff and adminis-

ing its \$1 billion annual budget.

"The Security Council has agreed informally that it is going to try to make its recommendation (on a candidate) during the month of October," said the British ambassador, Sir David Hannay.

"All delegations need good advance knowledge of who is in the field" so the council can recommend "a new appointee, or re-appointee" for adoption by the General Assembly, he said.

"There are no restrictions on who may be secretary-general of the United Nations, and that includes Perez de Cuellar," Hannay said.

Another council diplomat said privately that the body wants plenty of advance notice so it has time to investigate the backgrounds of the candidates.

"We don't want another Kurt Waldheim," he quipped.

Waldheim, the Austrian who served two terms as secretary-general from 1972-81 and unsuccessfully campaigned for a third term, concealed his World War II service as a German army officer in the Balkans.

The secret campaigning and lobbying among nations will intensify in the summer and reach a

climax this autumn, when the Security Council will make its choice and present it to the General Assembly for approval.

In practice, the five permanent Security Council members with veto power — the United States, Soviet Union, China, Britain and France — agree upon a mutually acceptable candidate to present to the General Assembly.

At least 26 candidates, both famous and obscure, have emerged from all corners of the world as possible successors to Perez de Cuellar, a Peruvian.

Some potential candidates, such as former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, are considered long-shots because the five permanent Security Council members have traditionally blocked nominees from their own ranks.

"It is a practice that the five permanent members have never provided a secretary-general, and I would be very surprised if that is broken," Hannay said.

Others who are considered more likely possibilities include: Retired Nigerian Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo, a former president.

— Olara Otunnu, a former Ugandan U.N. ambassador.

— Ali Alatas, the foreign minister of Indonesia who has been deeply involved in seeking a diplomatic solution to Cambodia's civil war.

— Gro Harlem Brundtland, prime minister of Norway.

— Thorvald Stoltenberg, foreign minister of Norway and former U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

— Martti Ahtisaari, a U.N. undersecretary-general from Finland who was the top U.N. official overseeing Namibia's transition to independence.

— Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, who is in charge of coordinating the U.N.'s relief programme in the Gulf and is a former U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

— Tommy Koe, Singapore's former ambassador to Washington and the United Nations.

— Oscar Arias Sanchez, the Nobel Peace Prize winner and former Costa Rican president who devised the Central American peace plan.

— Maurice Strong, a Canadian multimillionaire now organising a U.N. conference on the environment.